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★★★★★★★

「たたられてるんだ、力石の亡霊に！」顔面を打てない欠かんボクサー丈・・・真赤な血を吐く咬ませいぬ丈・・・ダウンする殺し屋丈！　だが、丈は賭ける、リングに明日を！　話題の感動巨編！

★★★★★★★

オリジナルデザイン／水野石文
（水野プロダクション）

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10

TOMORROW'S JOE

Written by Asao Takamori (Kajiwara Ikki)
Drawn by Chiba Tetsuya

宿敵力石　徹との対決を念願に、プロボクシング界入りをした矢吹　丈は、野性の強打で今は〝殺し屋ジョー〟の異名をとる人気ボクサーとなっていた。

そしてついに迎えた対決の日――。試合は息づまる熱戦となったが、最終回、丈は力石の猛打をあびてKOされた。

だが、勝った力石も、試合終了後、丈の強打ときびしい減量がもとで、リング上に倒れて絶命した。

ライバルの悲壮な最期に、丈は返らぬ友への痛恨の情と、はげしい虚脱感におそわれ、リング生活をすてて、自暴自棄の放浪生活をつづけた。

しかし、リングへの復帰こそ、力石の死を生かす道と説く、白木葉子や段平らの忠告で、丈の心に、ふたたびリングへの意欲が甦ってきた……。

★前巻までのあらすじ★

UNLIKE THE ANXIOUS DANPEI AND NISHI, JOE RETURNED TO HIS LIVELY AND HIGH-SPIRITED SELF.

JOE BUSIED HIMSELF TRAINING WITH ALL THE ENERGY HE HAD.

BASKED IN THE HOPEFUL GAZES OF HIS NEIGHBOURS,

HE CAME TO STAND ONCE MORE IN THE SPOTLIGHT OF KOURAKUEN HALL.

AND SO, AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS SINCE THE MATCH AGAINST RIKIISHI,

THE LEVEL OF ANTICIPATION COULDN'T BE HIGHER.

WITH PEOPLE EAGER TO SEE YABUKI JOE'S LONG-AWAITED RETURN TO THE RING.

KOURAKUEN HALL WAS PACKED FULL,

THE BANTAMWEIGHT HOTSHOT ROOKIE FROM OKISHIMA BOXING CLUB.

JOE'S MATCH TONIGHT WOULD BE TONOYA KOUSUKE,

GO, JOE!
GO, JOE!
GO, JOE!

WE'LL BE CHEERING FOR YOU SO DO YOUR BEST, BROTHER JOE!

HEY, JOE! IT'S BEEN A REAL LONG TIME!

HOW'VE YOU BEEN!?

SHOW US THAT YOU'VE STILL GOT IT!

SO... WHAT'S THIS GUY CALLED TONOYA LIKE?

HEH HEH...

I'LL SEE ABOUT THAT

STRONG HITTER, EH?

HE WINS BY KO MORE THAN HALF THE TIME TOO. A REAL STRONG HITTER, THAT ONE...

HE TURNED PRO JUST THE FALL LAST, LAST YEAR AND HE BOASTS A RECORD OF 13-1 SINCE THEN.

HE'S OKISHIMA BOXING CLUB'S NEW HOPE.

WOULDN'T YOU SAY THE ATMOSPHERE ON THE RINGSIDE IS A LITTLE TENSE TONIGHT?

IN ANY CASE,

OTOWA CLUB'S PRESIDENT AND MANAGERS ARE HERE TOO.

THERE'S WOLF KANAGUSHI'S FORMER MANAGER AND OWNER OF ASIA BOXING, OOTAKA.

WEST JAPAN GYM,

THE PRESIDENTS OF PACIFIC GYM,

AND FUJI BOXING ARE ALL HERE.

TENNOUJI BOXING,

BOKUTOU BOXING,

UMEMOTO BOXING,

YOUKO FROM SHIRAKI GYM.
YOU FORGOT TO MENTION,
THEY'RE ALL SITTING PATIENTLY ON THE SIDE LIKE THEY PLANNED IN ADVANCE FOR THIS...
I'M FEELIN' MORE ENERGETIC BY THE SECOND!
HEH HEH. I DIDN'T KNOW I WAS THAT FAMOUS OF A STAR.
THEY'RE CURIOUS TO SEE WHAT KIND OF FIGHT YOU'LL SHOW AFTER BEING ABSENT FOR SO LONG.
IN ANY CASE, THEY'RE ALL OBVIOUSLY HERE FOR YOU.

I DON'T CARE IF IT'S TONOYA OR TOYOTA I'M FIGHTING, I'LL LAY HIM FLAT ON THE RING IN NO TIME!

IT'D BE FINE IF THAT HAPPENS AS EASILY AS YOU SAY.

ALL I'M SAYING IS THAT IT'S HARD TO PREDICT HOW THINGS'LL TURN OUT IN THE SPORT OF BOXING.

WHAT, YOU THINK HE'LL BEAT ME OR SOMETHING?

THE HELL'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?

NO, 'COURSE NOT..

AND IT'S NOT JUST YOU EITHER! NISHI TOO! YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'RE STANDING ON PINS AND NEEDLES!

WHAT'S... WITH YOU TONIGHT, OLD MAN?

YABUKI!

SO THE LEAST YOU TWO COULD DO IS GIVE ME SOME ENCOURAGEMENT!

I WORKED MY ASS OFF TO GET BACK ONTO THE RING AFTER ALL THAT'S HAPPENED,

THERE'S NO NEED TO GET ALL WORKED UP. COME ON THEN, THE REF IS CALLING.

NO HEAD BUTTING OR HITTING BELOW THE BELT.

I WANT A CLEAN FIGHT, BOYS.

NISHI AND I ARE JUST A LITTLE NERVOUS SINCE THIS IS YOUR FIRST MATCH AFTER SUCH A LONG WHILE.

DON'T TAKE IT THE WRONG WAY.

LITTLE, MY ASS!

YOU RECKON THOSE BOXING CLUB OWNERS GATHERED TONIGHT FOR SOME SECRET PURPOSE...?

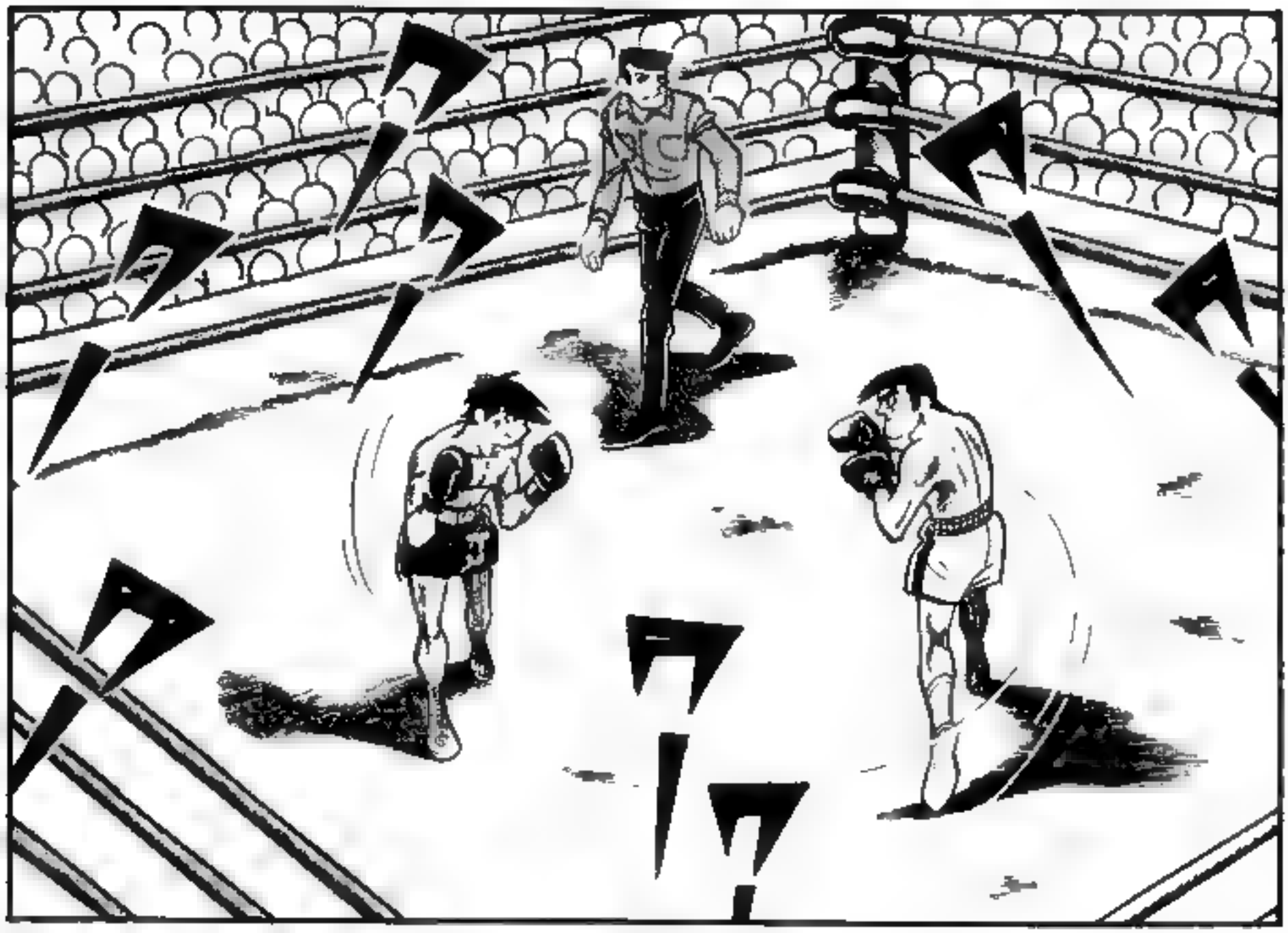
OLD MAN...

IF HE CAN ONLY HIT BODY BLOWS AS YOU SAY, TONIGHT'S MATCH WILL BE...

LET'S JUST FOCUS ON JOE FOR NOW.

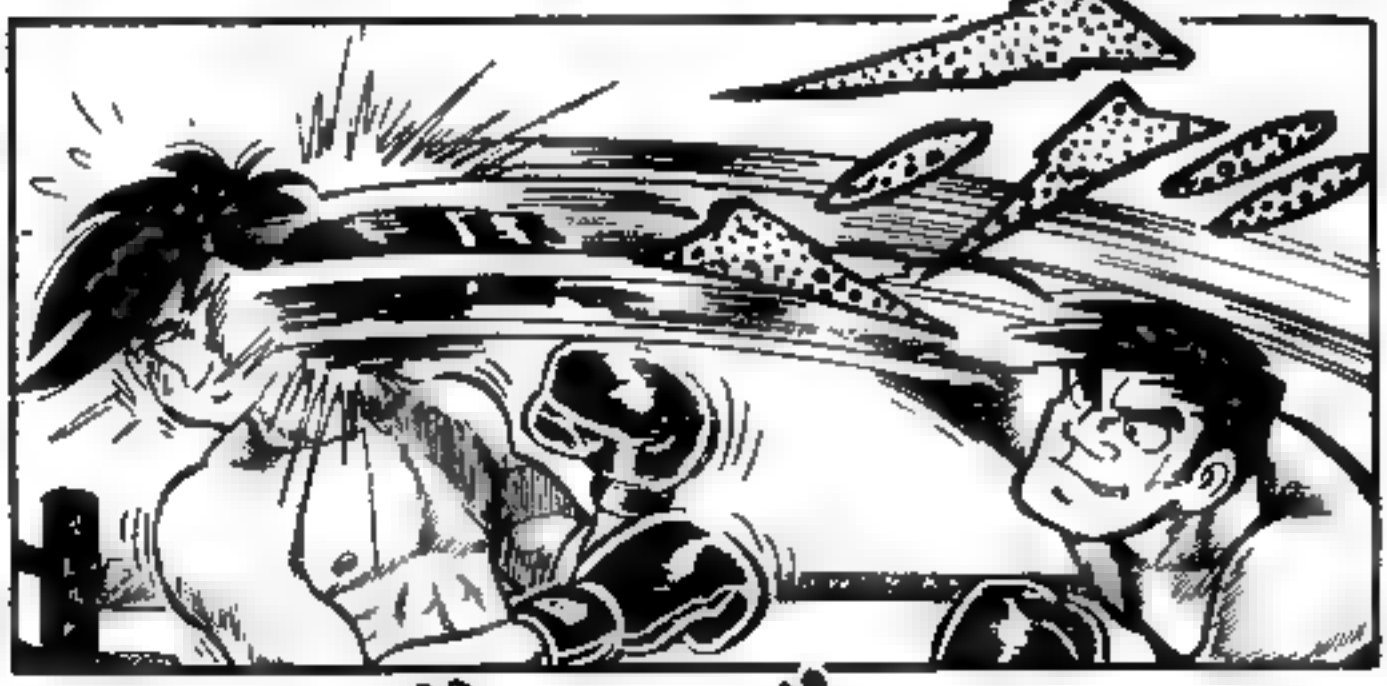
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?

G-GO, JOE!



C'MON, JOE!
FINISH IT IN ONE ROUND!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME TWICE...



KEEP UP THE ATTACK!
THAT'S IT TONOYA!

....

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CAN'T BELIEVE THEY CALL YOU A STRONG HITTER WITH THOSE KINDS OF PUNCHES.

HEH HEH...

LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT A STRONG PUNCH IS REALLY LIKE!

NOW THEN...

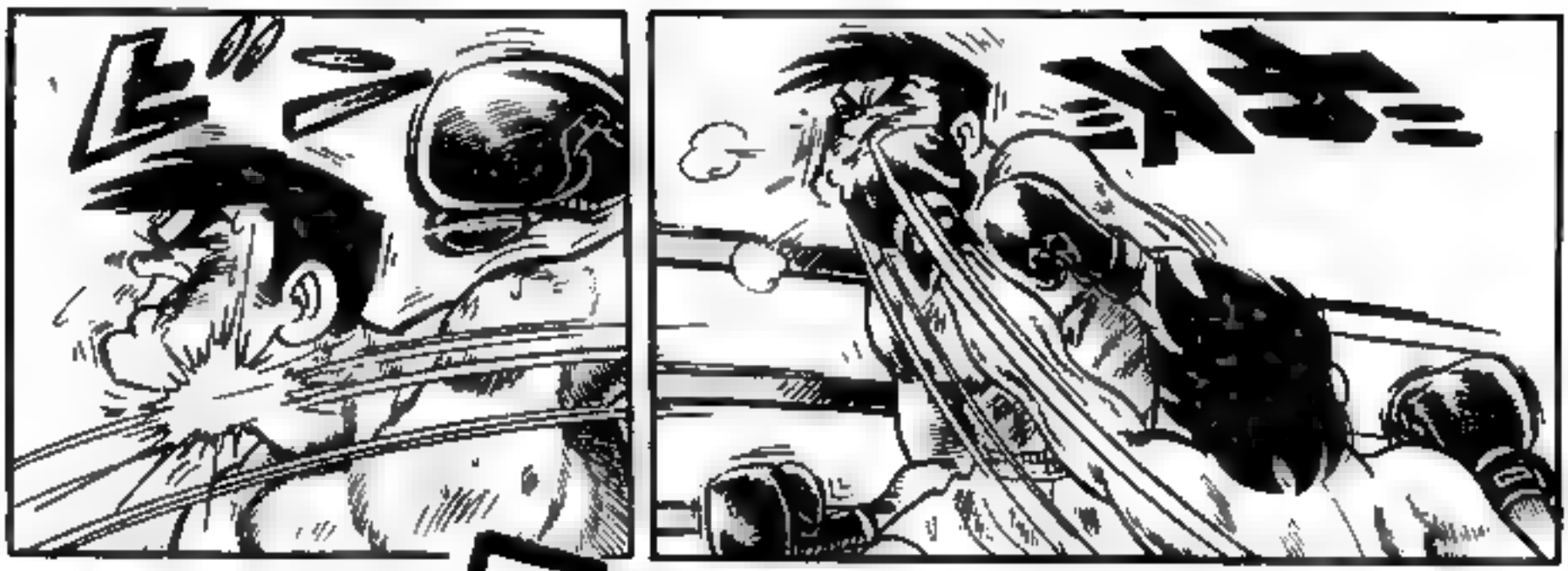
HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

HAH!
JOE HIT HIS FACE!
AHHH!
OOF!
LIGHH.
T-TURN AROUND, TONOYA! TURN AROUND!
AGHHH!



KO

NGHH...

UGHH.

THE BELL HASN'T RUNG YET!
W-WHAT'S WRONG, JOE!?
WHY'RE YOU JUST WALKIN' AWAY!?

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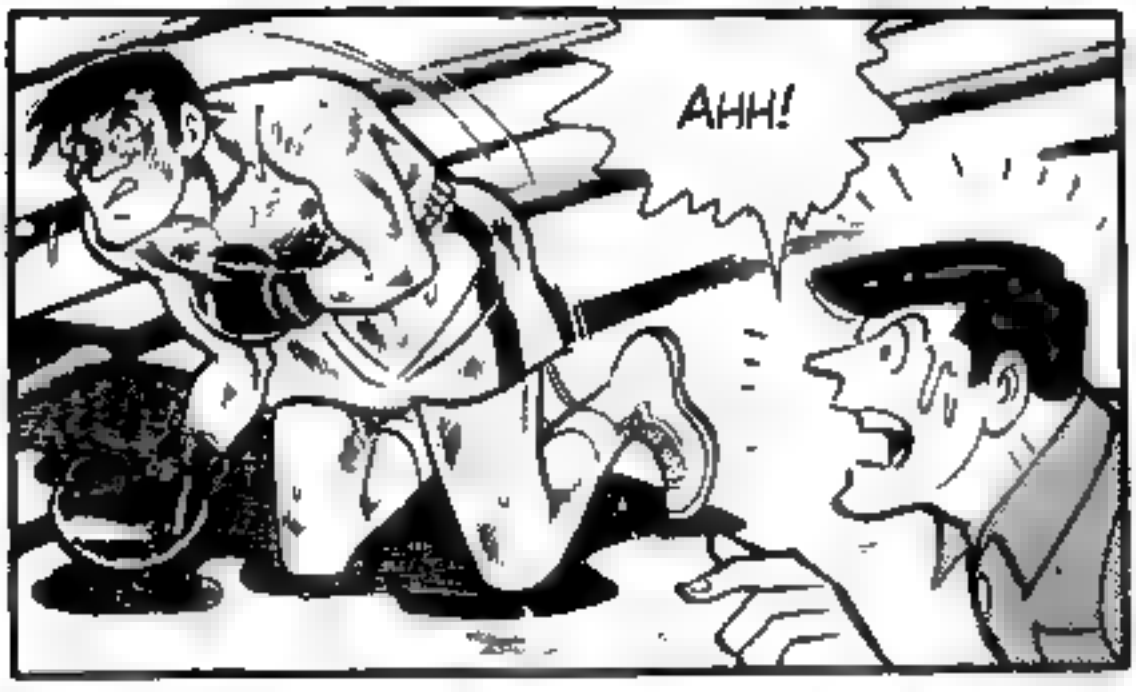
AHH!

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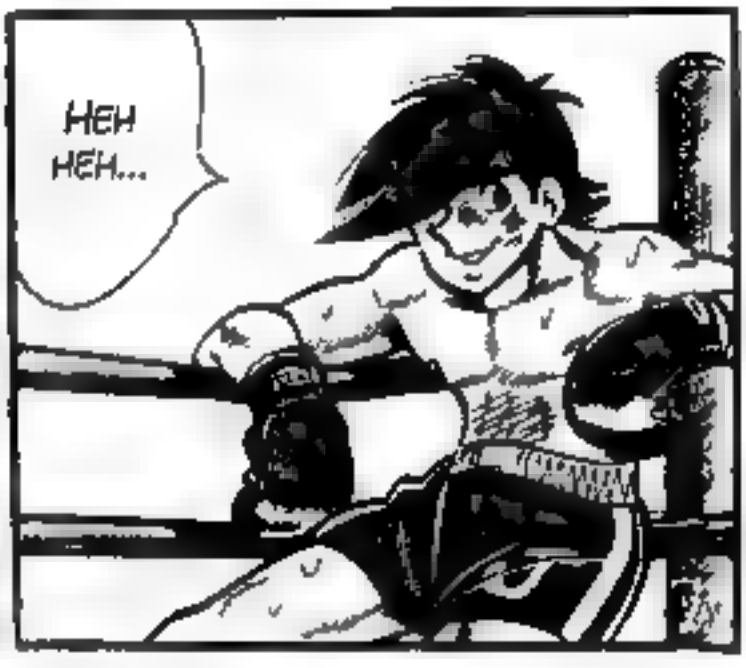
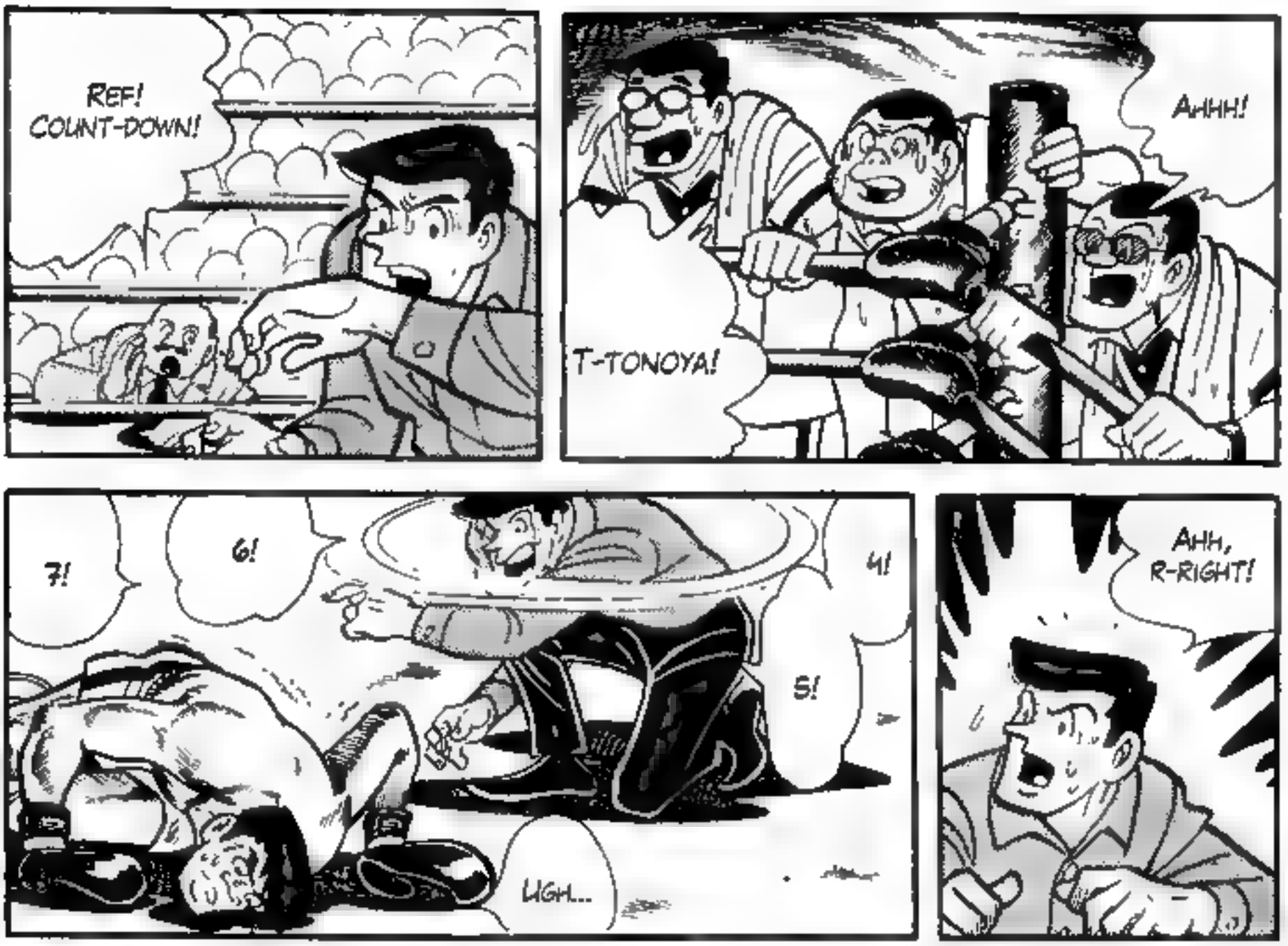

HEH HEH...


REF! COUNT-DOWN!
AHHH!
T-TONOYA!
7!
6!
5!
4!
UGH...
AHH, R-RIGHT!
YABUKI WINS BY KO!
ゴーン
8!
9!
10!

HEH HEH, IT WAS NOTHIN'...

NICE!

TALK ABOUT A FAST ONE!

YOU REALLY FINISHED IT IN JUST ONE ROUND!

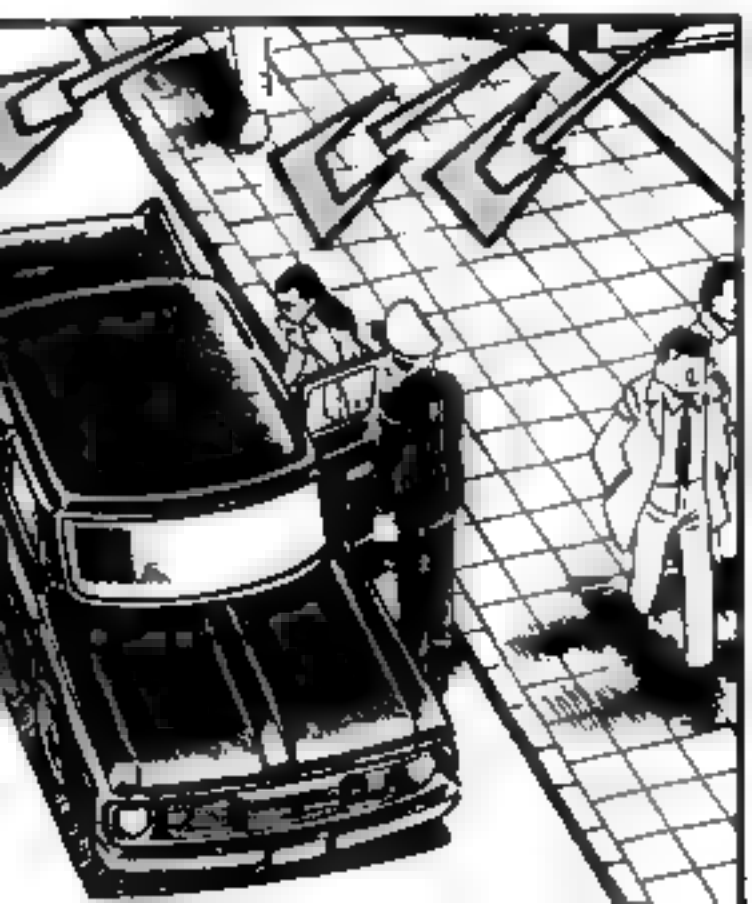
I GUESS ALL OUR WORRIES WERE FOR NOTHING!

D-DID YOU SEE HIM!? HE DISHED OUT BLOWS TO THE HEAD!

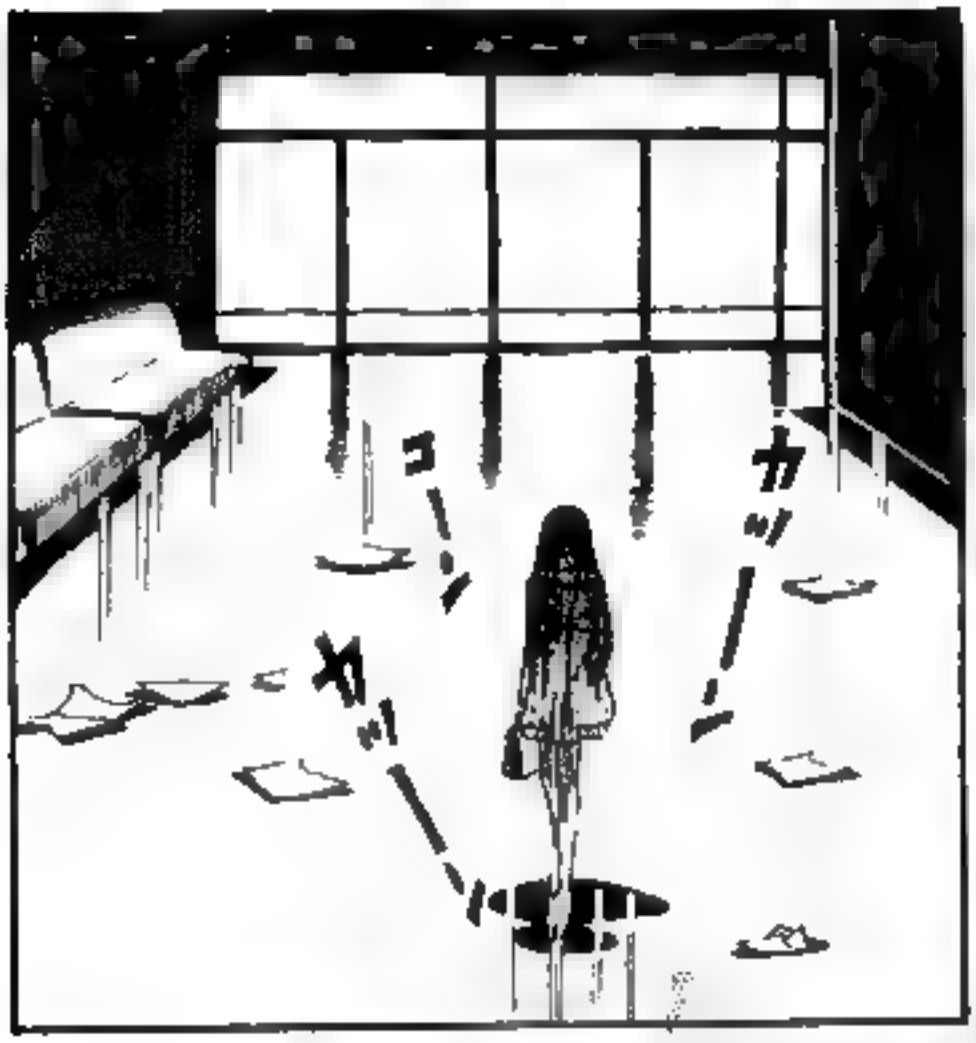
YOU'RE AMAZING, BROTHER JOE!

THAT WAS A REAL SHOCKER!

BUT SOMETHING ABOUT THOSE CLUB OWNERS ALL WALKING OFF TOGETHER IS GETTING ON MY NERVES...
NOT THAT I CARE OR ANYTHING,



THE SAME GOES FOR HER TOO...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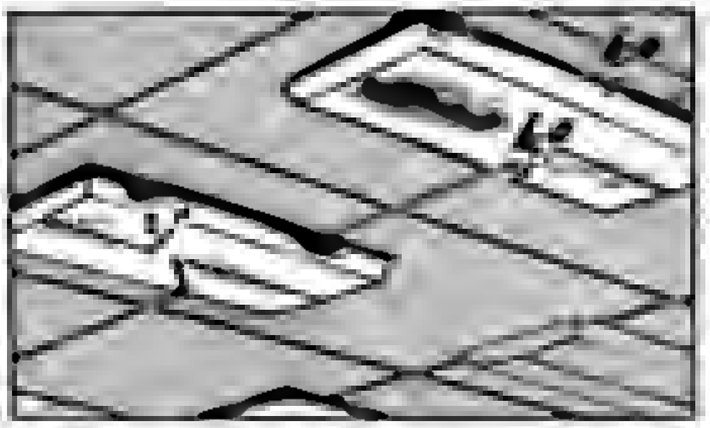
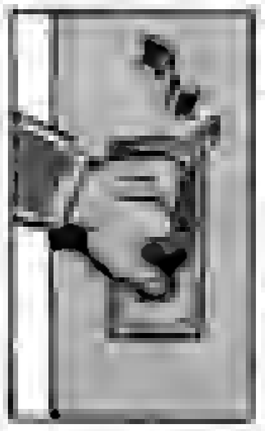
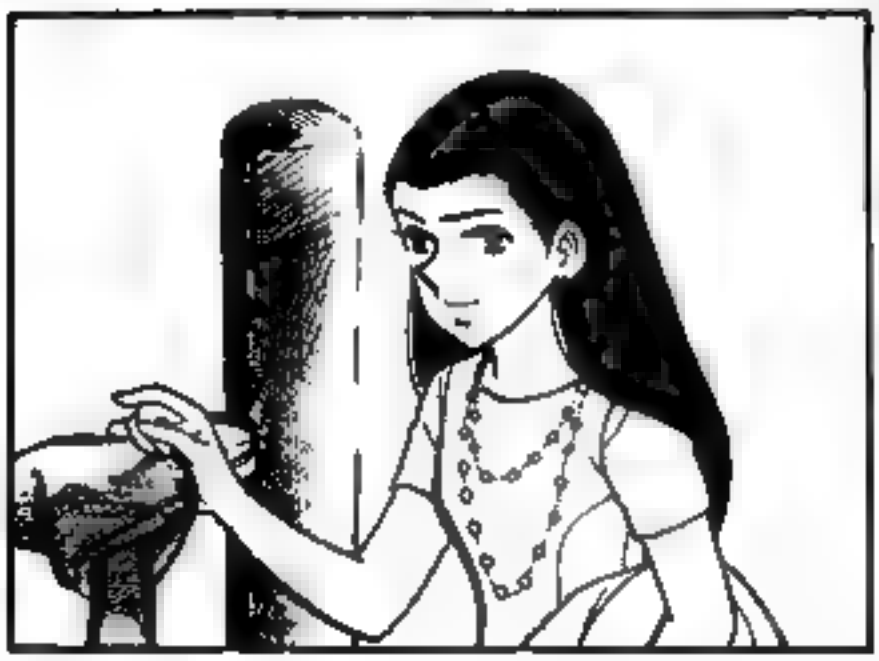
SHINJUKU
BOXING
CLUB



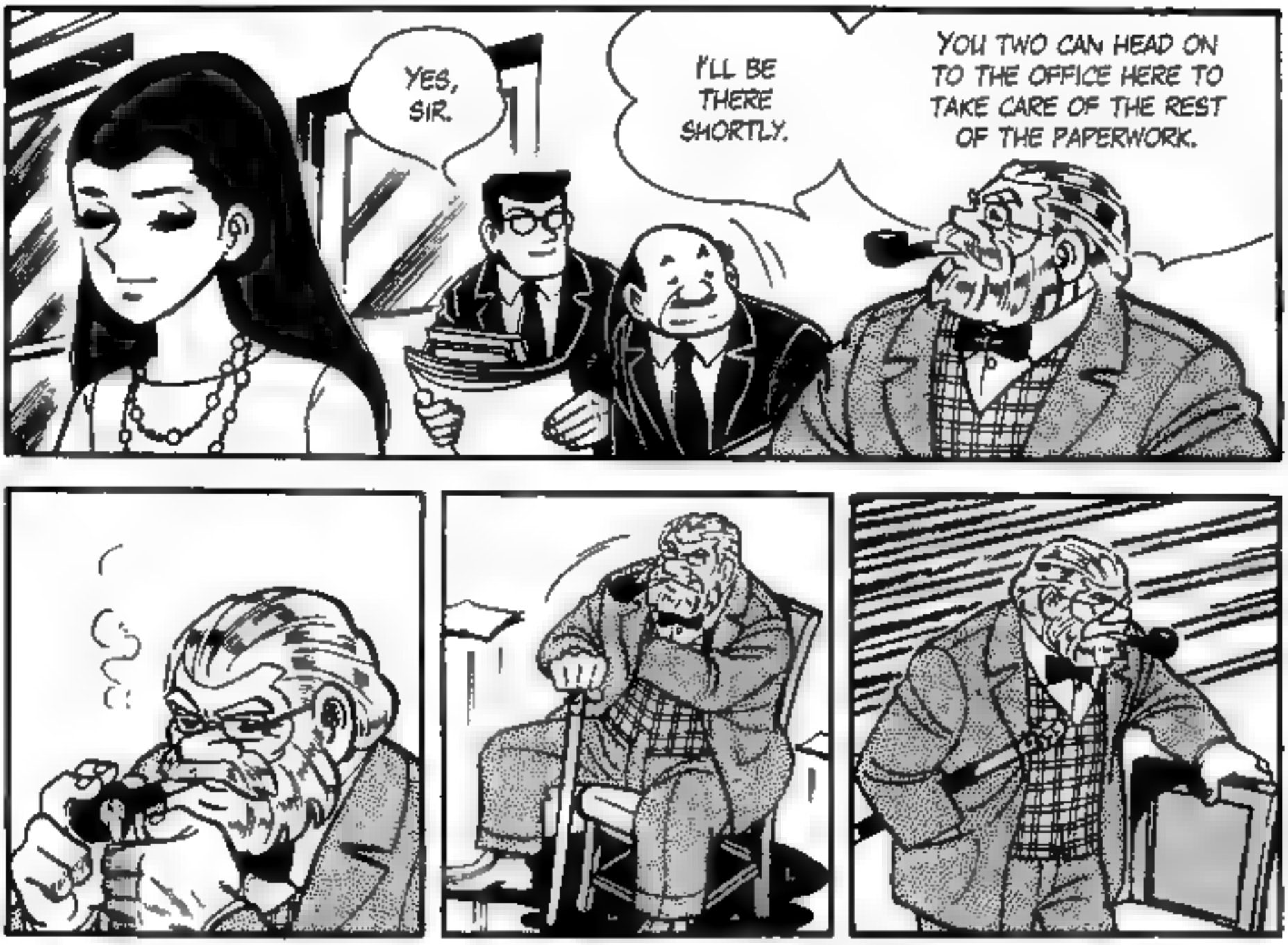


WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
AH, IF IT ISN'T YOUKO...

HAHA, IT SEEMS MY HOBBY HAS COME TO AN END WITH RIKIISHI...
IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GIVE UP THIS SHIRAKI GYM, YOU SEE.



I SHOULD ASK WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE SO LATE AT NIGHT.
GRAND-FATHER...
OH, I'M JUST TAKING CARE OF THE PAPERS FOR THIS GYM.


YES, SIR.
I'LL BE THERE SHORTLY.
YOU TWO CAN HEAD ON TO THE OFFICE HERE TO TAKE CARE OF THE REST OF THE PAPERWORK.

YES, THAT'S HOW IT SHOULD BE.
HA.
A KO WIN 2 MINUTES AND 36 SECONDS INTO THE FIRST ROUND.
HE WON.
HOW WAS IT? HOW WAS YABUKI'S FIGHT TONIGHT...?
I'M QUITE PLEASED TO HEAR HE'S MADE A SPLENDID RECOVERY.
I KNEW HE WOULDN'T STAY EMOTIONALLY BROKEN FOREVER.
HE'S A BOXING PRODIGY ON THE SAME LEVEL AS RIKIISHI TOORU HIMSELF.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT...?

I DON'T THINK I CAN QUITE ACCEPT HIS HALF-HEARTED EFFORT,

TO BE HONEST, I WAS QUITE DISAPPOINTED BY HIS PERFORMANCE TONIGHT.

IF YOU CAN CALL IT SPLENDID..

I WONDER, WELL,

WHAT DO I MEAN?

AND NEITHER WOULD RIKIISHI, IF HE'S WATCHING FROM BEYOND THE GRAVE.

WELL, FINE.

IT'S... HARD TO SAY FOR NOW...

IT'S NOT PROPER FOR A LADY LIKE YOU TO KEEP WORKING IN THE RING.

YOU'RE THE LONE DAUGHTER AND HEIR TO THE SHIRAKI ZAIBATSU.

I THINK IT'S ABOUT TIME FOR YOU TO LEAVE THE BOXING WORLD AS WELL.

IN ANY CASE,

PLEASE GIVE THIS GYM TO ME.

NOW THEN, LET'S GO.

IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO TAKE UP A MORE FEMININE HOBBY LIKE FLOWER ARRANGING, IN MY OPINION.

GRANDFATHER... I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.

I WANT TO BE THE NEW PRESIDENT OF SHIRAKI GYM,

AND RAISE FINE BOXERS FOR THE NEXT GENERATION!

MR MATSUKI!

!!0 !!0

YOU'LL ALLOW IT, WON'T YOU?

THERE'S ALREADY ANOTHER FEMALE CLUB OWNER IN THE JAPANESE BOXING ASSOCIATION, SO WHY CAN'T I?

YOUKO! YOU...

AT THIS LATE IN THE EVENING ...?

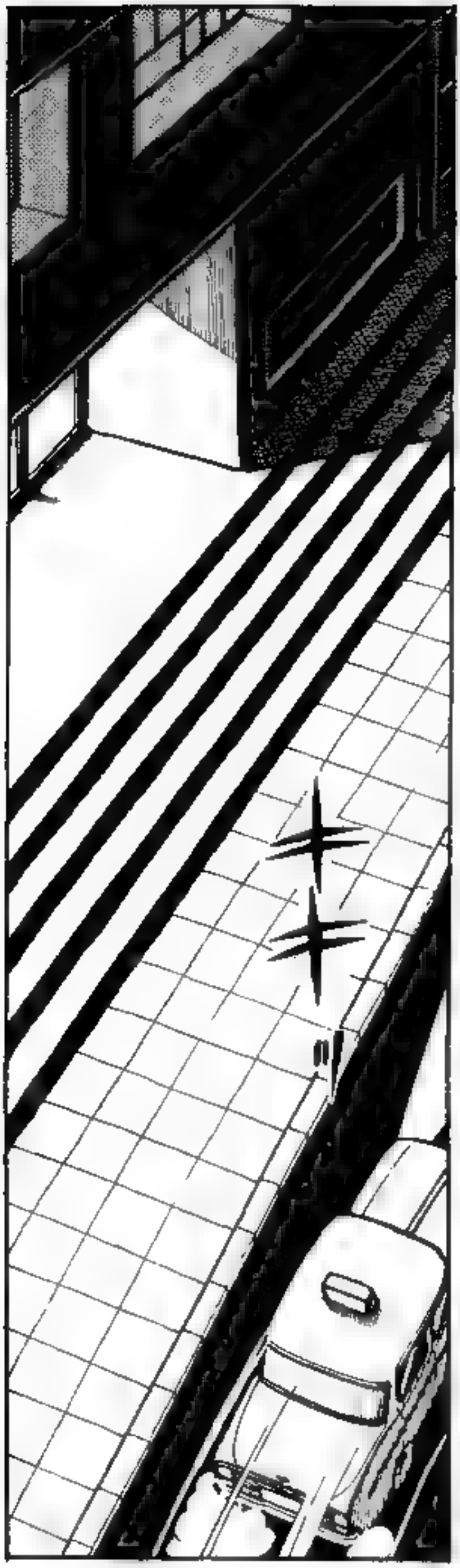
WHA!?

I WANT TO HOLD AN URGENT MEETING.

I'M SORRY TO MAKE YOU WORK SO HARD THIS LATE IN THE NIGHT BUT PLEASE CONTACT ALL THOSE AFFILIATED WITH THE SHIRAKI GYM.

WHAT IS IT?

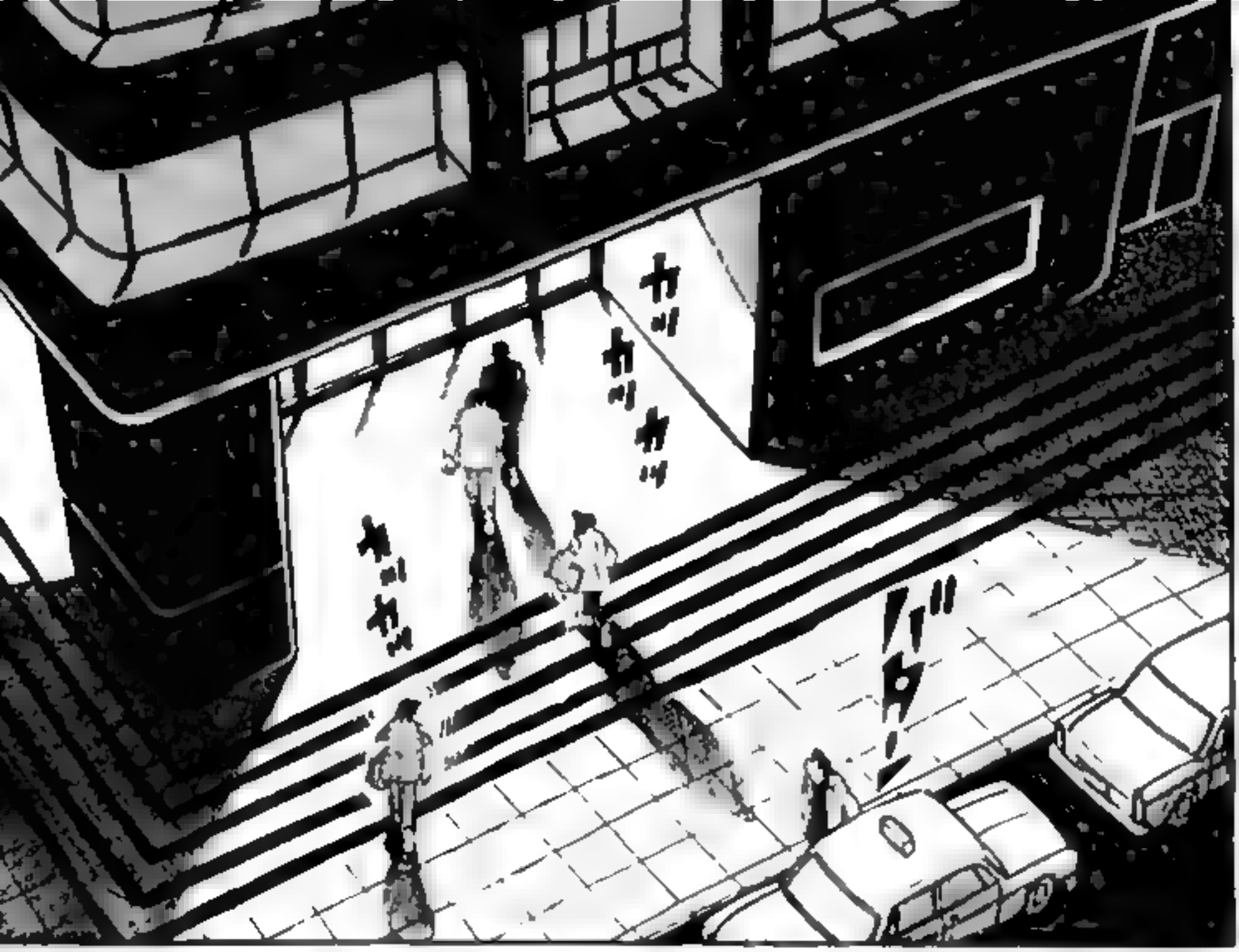
YES?

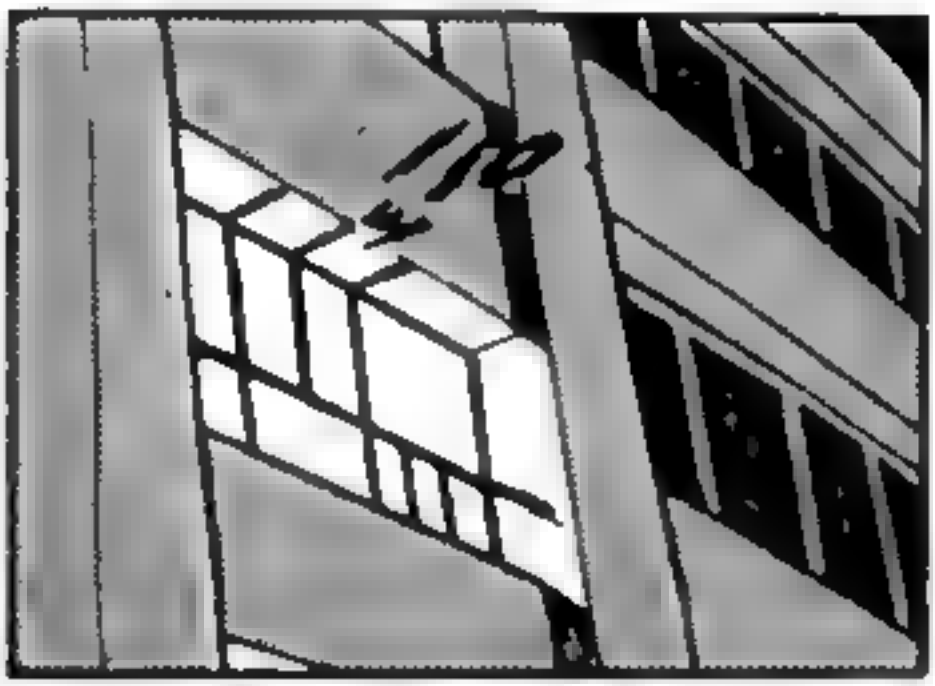


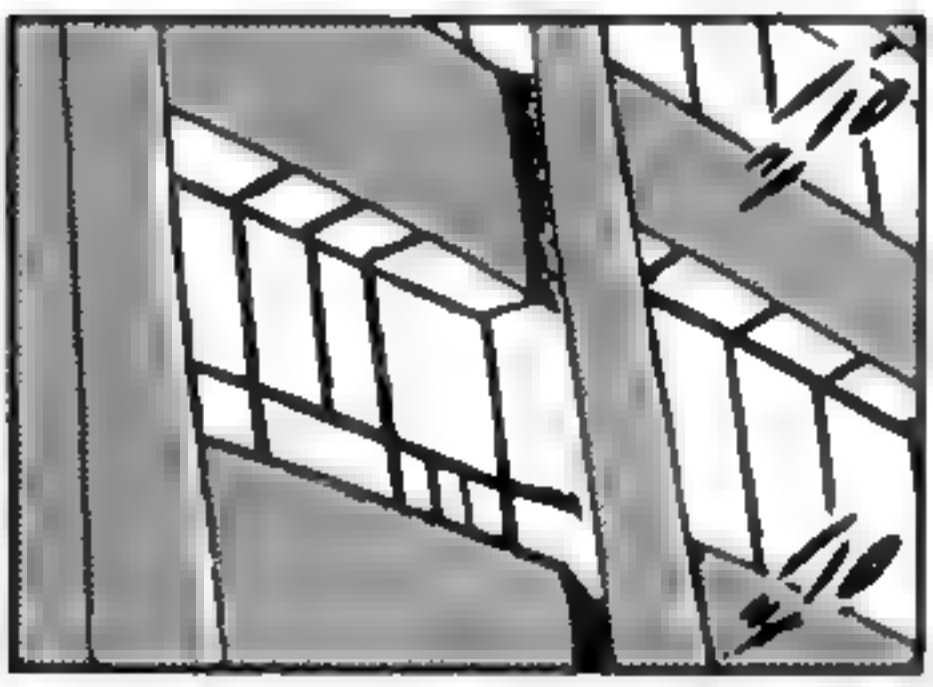
QUICKLY, IF YOU CAN.
PLEASE CALL UP ALL THE COACHES AND MANAGERS.
Y-YES, MISS...

HELLO? THIS IS MATSUKI FROM SHIRAKI SPEAKING. .

IT'LL BE RIGHT HERE IN SHIRAKI GYM.
YES, A MEETING TONIGHT! COME QUICKLY!







一方(いっぽう)、さて

SHIRAKI BOXING

BY EASILY DESTROYING WHATEVER THE OTHER BOXING GYMS HAD TO THROW AT HIM.

MEANWHILE, JOE CONTINUED TO EXTEND HIS WINNING STREAK,

PANT

PANT

PANT

PANT

HAHA, THEY SAID "STILL HUMAN"..

GET AROUND HIM AND USE YOUR RIGHT!

EVEN YABUKI'S STILL HUMAN! DON'T BE AFRAID OF HIM!

USE YOUR LEGS!

...

LOOKS LIKE THIS MATCH IS JUST ABOUT OVER!

HAHA! SCREAMING AT HIM ISN'T GONNA MAKE HIM ANY LESS SCARED OUT OF HIS WITS!

C'MON, KILLER JOE!

USE YOUR GODDAMN LEGS! YOU DO HAVE TWO OF THEM, Y'KNOW!

DON'T JUST STAND THERE!

UGH...

OOF!

THAT IDIOT...

CRAP, HE'S BEEN SO EASILY PUSHED BACK TO THE ROPES...

EASY PICKINGS.

HEH HEH,

AHH!

AHH.

UGH...

HEH

OOF!

HAVING TO FACE THE SAME PUNCHES THAT EVEN TOOK RIKIISHI'S LIFE WAS A NIGHTMARE FOR HIS OPPONENTS.

NONE COULD MUSTER A PROPER DEFENSE AGAINST JOE'S NEW TACTIC OF FOCUSING PRIMARILY ON THE BODY, WITH THE OCCASIONAL HIGH PUNCHES THROWN TO MIX IT UP.

AMONG THE OTHER BOXERS, IT WAS SAID THAT GETTING KNOCKED OUT FROM JOE'S BLOW TO THE HEAD WAS HEAVEN BECAUSE YOU'D INSTANTLY LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS, BUT TAKING A BODY BLOW FROM HIM WAS ABSOLUTE HELL...

GAHHHHH!

AND SO,

MANY OF JOE'S OPPONENTS HAD TO BE CARRIED AWAY TO THE HOSPITAL AFTER THE MATCH FOR HEMORRHAGE AND ORGAN DAMAGE.

IT WAS NOT LONG BEFORE HIS NEW NICKNAME BECAME THE "GRIM REAPER."

Japanese Boxing Association

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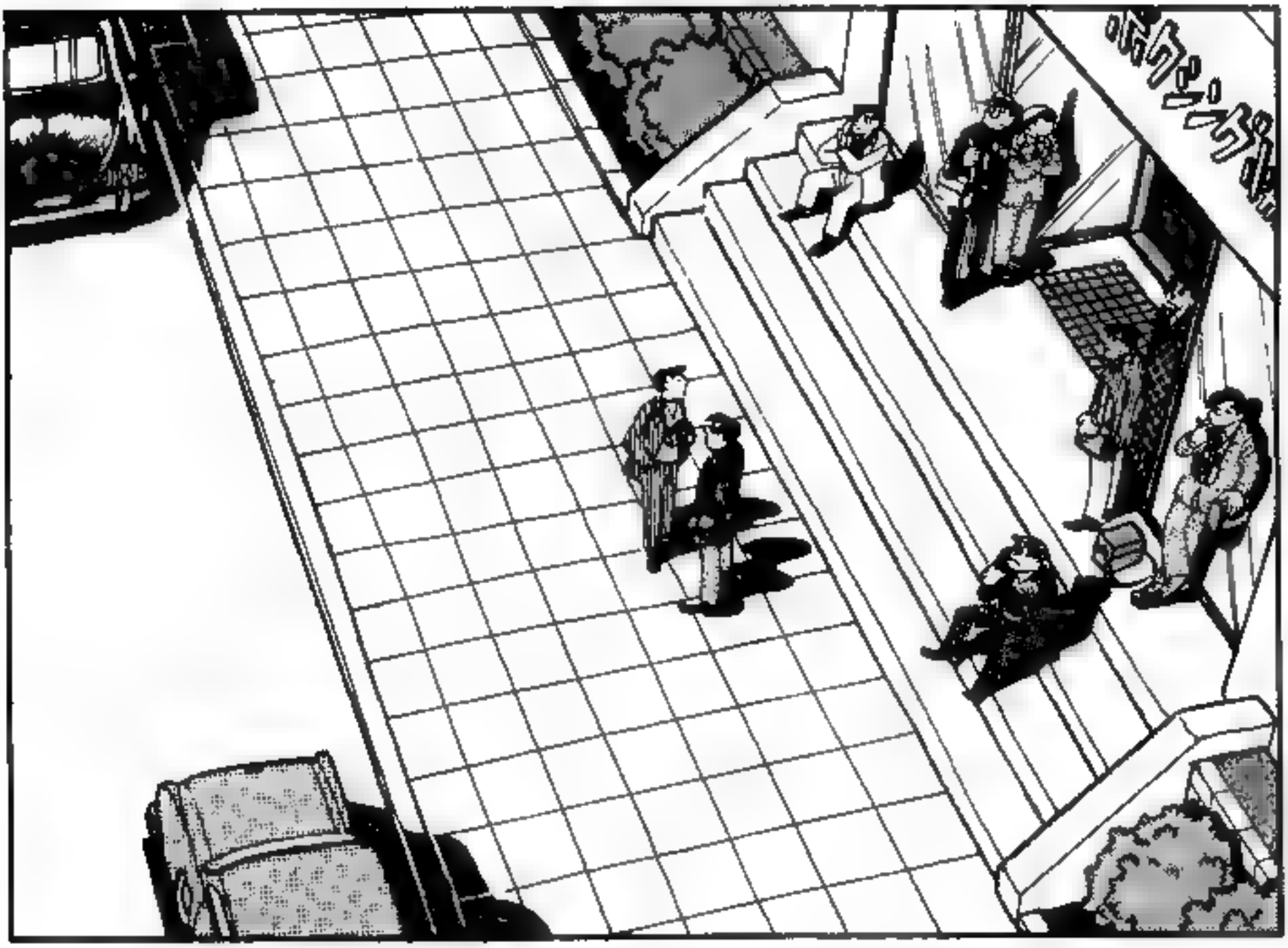
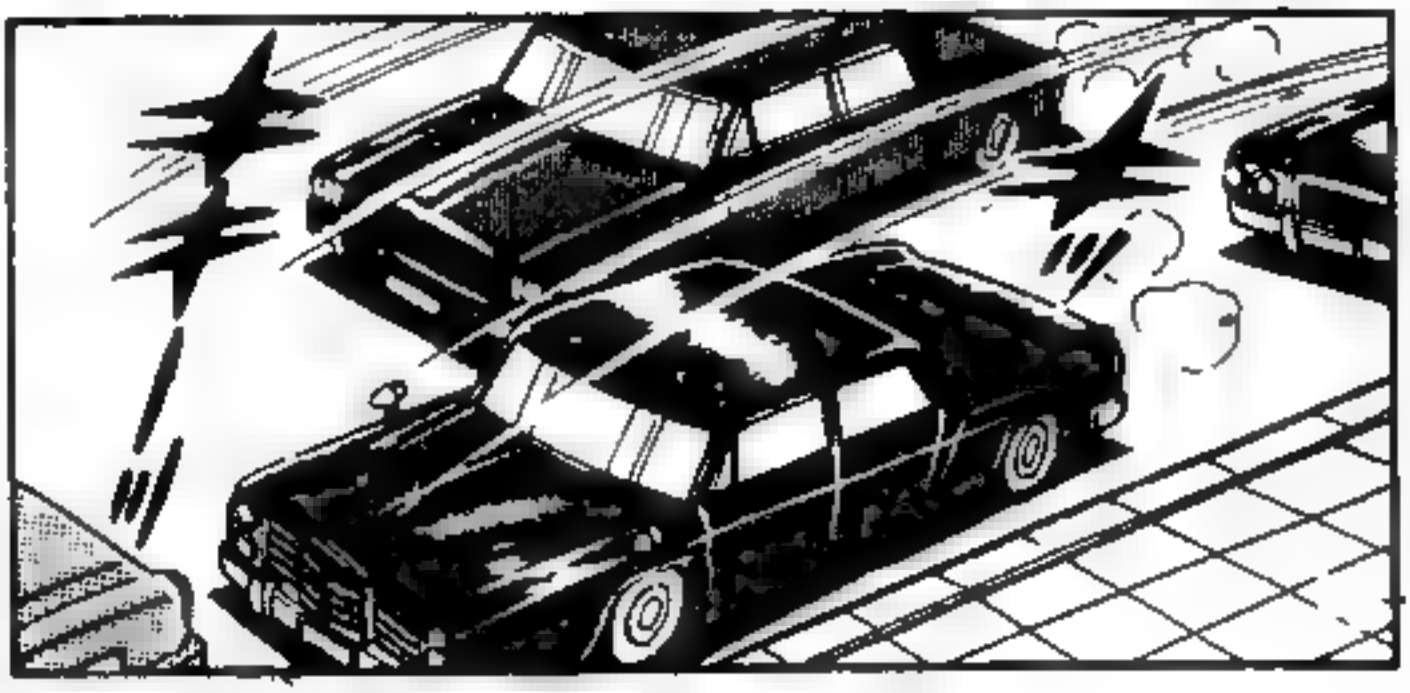


THAT'S RIGHT.
WHO KNOWS, BUT WE'LL STAKE OUT HERE UNTIL WE FIND OUT.

BUT I WONDER WHAT FOR?
I HEAR ALL THE BOXING OWNERS AND MANAGERS ARE SUPPOSED TO COME FOR A MEETING TODAY,

HERE THEY COME.



IS THERE SOME URGENT ISSUE TO TAKE CARE OF?

PRESIDENT OOTAKA, WHAT IS THE PURPOSE FOR THE MEETING TODAY?

ALL US CLUB OWNERS GET TOGETHER LIKE THIS EVERY NOW AND THEN JUST TO HAVE A FRIENDLY CHAT AND A DRINK FOR NETWORKING PURPOSES.

NO, THERE'S NO ISSUE AT ALL.

IT'S REALLY NOT ANYTHING WORTHY OF REPORTING.

AND THAT'S THE PACIFIC GYM'S OWNER, KUNITOMO!

IT'S ASIA GYM'S PRESIDENT OOTAKA.

NOW PLEASE, MOVE ASIDE.

IT'S NOTHING AT ALL, FOLKS. NOTHING AT ALL.

Conference Room

HMPH...

LET'S TRY TO WRAP THIS UP BEFORE TANGE GETS HERE.
TANGE...? HE'S COMING TOO?

SEEING AS HOW ALL THE MAJOR PLAYERS HAVE GATHERED, IT'S TIME TO START.
NOW THEN...

It seems he's the new star for the Japanese boxing fans.

Now, about that Yabuki Joe...

I see.

The whole reason why we're here today is to arrange Yabuki Joe's next match.

Of course he's coming.

And now, he's going around beating all our bantamweight boxers to a bloody pulp!

As well as Rikiishi, who was even said to be world-champion material...

After all, he broke my gym's hope, Wolf,

His popularity's not surprising.

All those nicknames accurately describe the crisis we've got on our hands. As such, I firmly believe...

Yes.

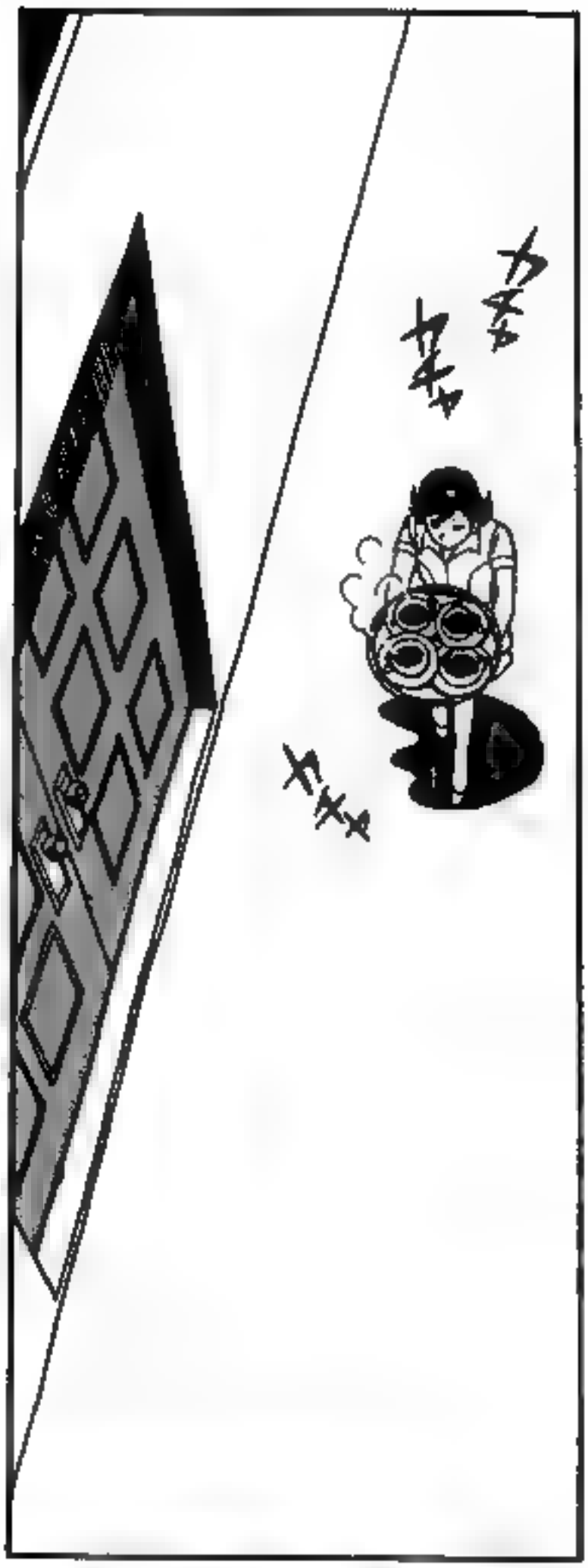
A messenger from hell!

The grim reaper!

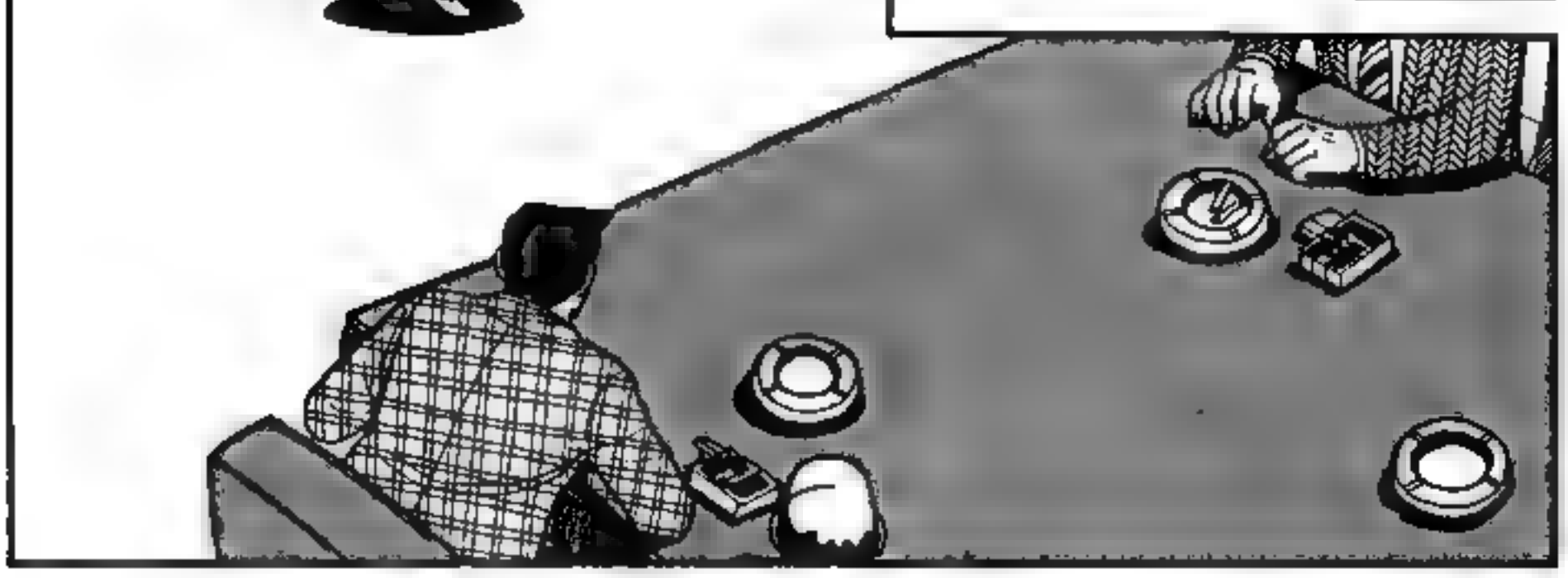
Yes, he's a real killer, like his fans say...

Must take care of this problem as soon as possible!

That we, the Boxing Association,



EXCUSE ME, SIRS.



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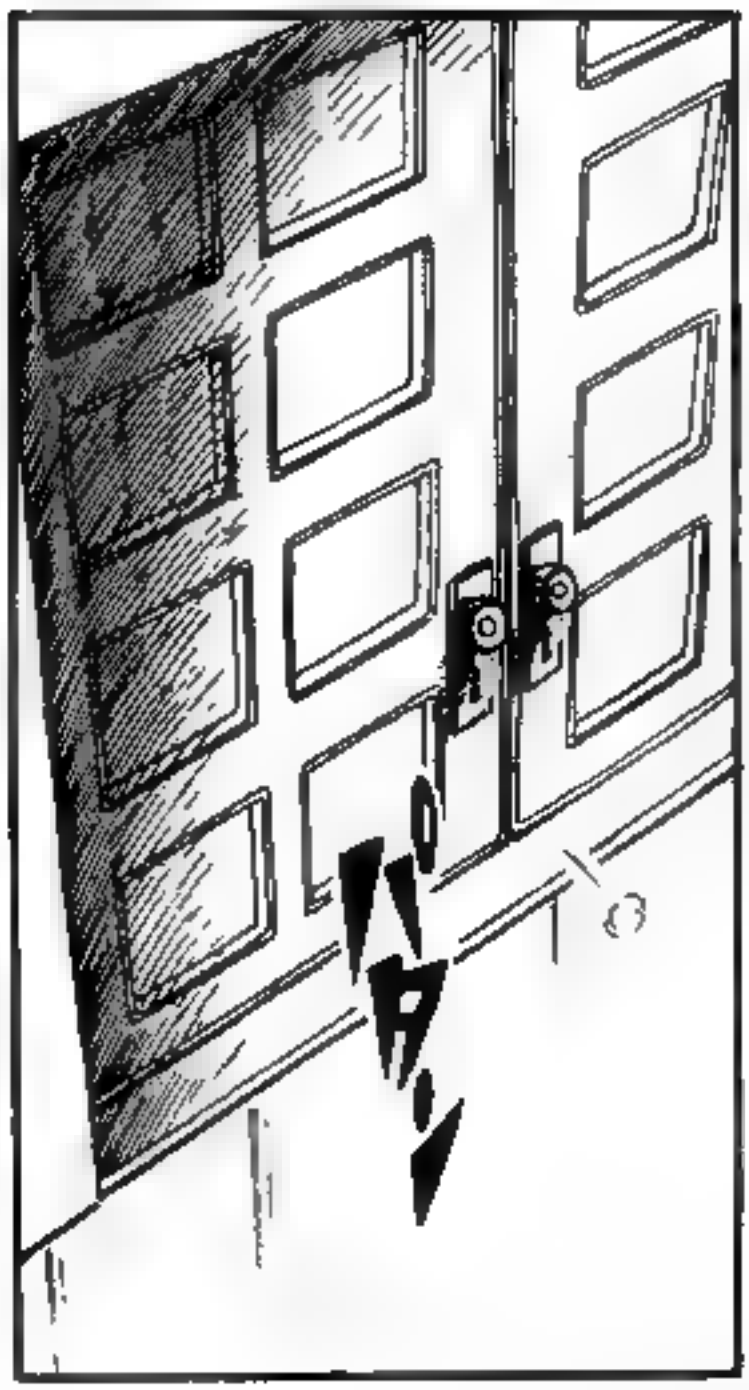
OH, OF COURSE.

AH-

WE'LL CALL YOU IF WE NEED YOU SO COULD YOU PLEASE EXCUSE YOURSELF?

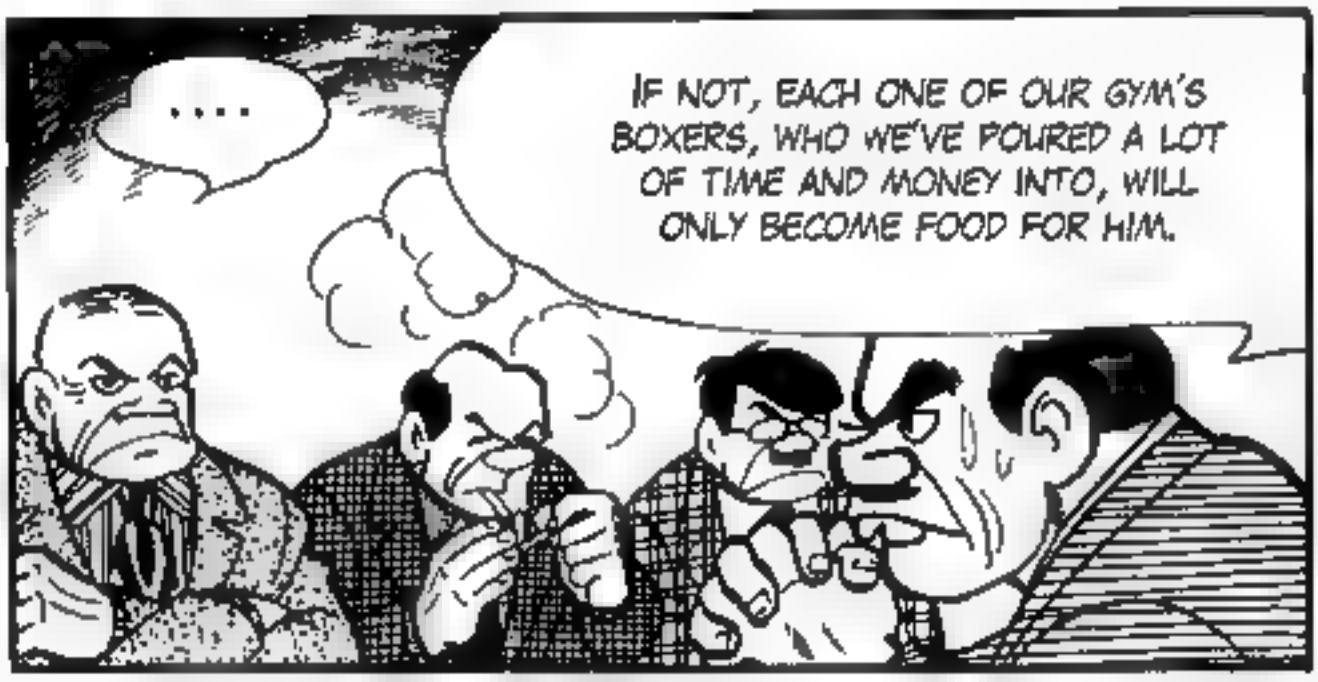
SORRY MISS, BUT WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A VERY IMPORTANT MEETING.

MNN...
I APOLOGIZE FOR INTRUDING.



IT'S BETTER TO TAKE CARE OF HIM NOW
CERTAINLY, AS YOU SAY

BUT THE BANTAM-WEIGHTS AT OUR GYM...
IT'S EMBARRASSING FOR ME TO ADMIT,


....
IF NOT, EACH ONE OF OUR GYM'S BOXERS, WHO WE'VE POURED A LOT OF TIME AND MONEY INTO, WILL ONLY BECOME FOOD FOR HIM.

SO HE'S STILL JUST A GREEN SPROUT TO THE BOXING WORLD AT LARGE.

HE ONLY GRADUATED FROM 8-ROUNDERS RECENTLY,

HMM..

ARE ALL SCARED OUT OF THEIR WITS BY EVEN THE VERY THOUGHT OF HAVING TO FIGHT HIM...

THE TIME TO CRUSH YABUKI IS NOW!

YES, EXACTLY. I'LL SAY IT AGAIN.

WE HAVE TO DO IT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

SO IF WE WANT TO GET HIM DOWN, THEN NOW'S THE BEST TIME.

THAT YABUKI GETS HAPPIER THE STRONGER HIS OPPONENT SO HE'LL NO DOUBT GO ALONG WITH OUR PLAN.

RANKED BANTAMWEIGHT VETERANS, ONE BY ONE.

WE'LL JUST HAVE HIM FIGHT,

SIMPLE.

THAT'S THE QUESTION.

BUT HOW?

AND THAT'S WHEN WE'LL STRIKE!

THE DAY WILL COME WHEN HIS BODY REACHES ITS LIMIT.

EVEN IF HE IS THE "KILLER," HE WON'T LAST LONG IF HE HAS TO KEEP ON FIGHTING RANKED VETERANS.

NOT ONLY THAT, THE FANS TOO WILL GET EXCITED AT SEEING YABUKI TAKE ON TOUGHER AND STRONGER OPPONENTS.

THEN HOW ABOUT I HAVE MY GYM'S HINO TERUTAKA FIGHT HIM?

FINE.

HINO...!?

THE DIFFERENCE IN STRENGTH AND EXPERIENCE IS JUST TOO MUCH!

HINO'S A VETERAN WHO'LL BE FIGHTING FOR THE BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE IN THE NEAR FUTURE!

THAT'S GOING WAY BEYOND OVERBOARD!

A-ARE YOU CRAZY!?

I WOULD STILL FEEL A LITTLE UNEASY EVEN IF HINO WERE MATCHED AGAINST HIM.

FROM WHICH HE CAN DRAW STRENGTH TO THE SURPRISE OF HIS OPPONENTS.

NO, I DISAGREE... THAT YABUKI HAS TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL,

HOW ABOUT WE HAVE YOUR GYM'S TIGER FIGHT HIM?

OOTOMO.

...

B-BUT...

...

SO HOW ABOUT YOU HAVE HIM FIGHT JOE AS A "PRACTICE" OF SORTS...

I HEAR YOUR PACIFIC GYM DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A SPARRING PARTNER THAT CAN STAND UP TO HIM NOW.

YOU MEAN MY TIGER OZAKI!?

T-TIGER?

BUT I'M WORRIED IF THE PUBLIC WOULD SO EASILY ACCEPT THAT...

W-WELL, I MYSELF DON'T MIND,

カリ カリ

TIGER'S THE BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMPION! THE CHAMP!

A-ARE YOU SERIOUS...?

THE FANS WOULD LINE UP FOR DAYS JUST TO BUY A TICKET FOR THIS MATCH.

AND AT LAST, YABUKI JOE WILL BE DESTROYED AS ALL OF JAPAN WA-

LIKE I SAID, THE PUBLIC WILL ONLY BE TOO HAPPY TO SEE A MATCH LIKE THIS!

WELL, GENTLEMEN?

THE CHAMPION TIGER OZAKI VS THE RISING STAR YABUKI JOE!

I WAS WONDERING WHAT YOU GENTLEMEN WOULD BE DISCUSSING TODAY,

BUT TO THINK IT'D BE SOMETHING LIKE THIS....

Y-YOU'RE...

HAHA.

UMM, WELL...

WE DIDN'T...

THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS SEND ME AN INVITATION IF A MEETING AMONG CLUB OWNERS IS TO BE HELD.

PLEASE DO KEEP IN MIND THAT I AM THE OWNER OF SHIRAKI GYM, REGARDLESS OF MY GENDER.

I FEAR SUCH A PITIFUL CONVERSATION DOES NOT SUIT MY TASTE, NOR DOES THIS STUFFY ATMOSPHERE.

HAVING SAID THAT, I'LL TAKE MY LEAVE NOW.

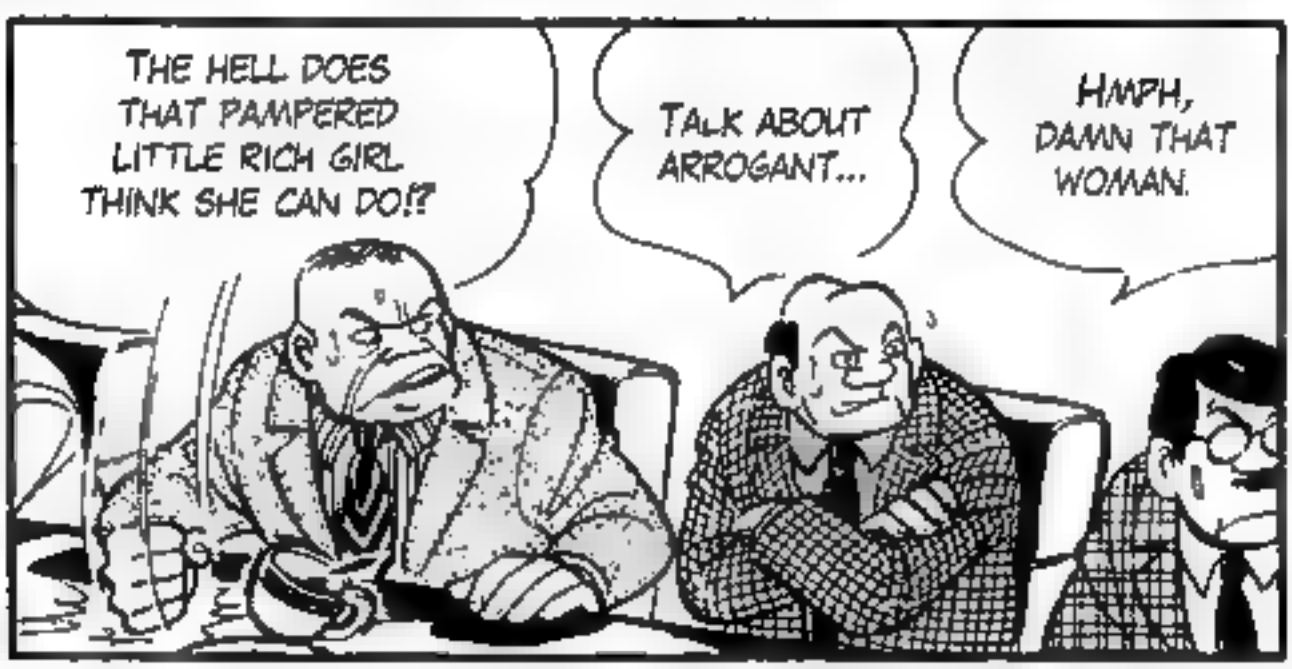
I SHALL WORK EARNESTLY TOWARDS A FAIR VICTORY.

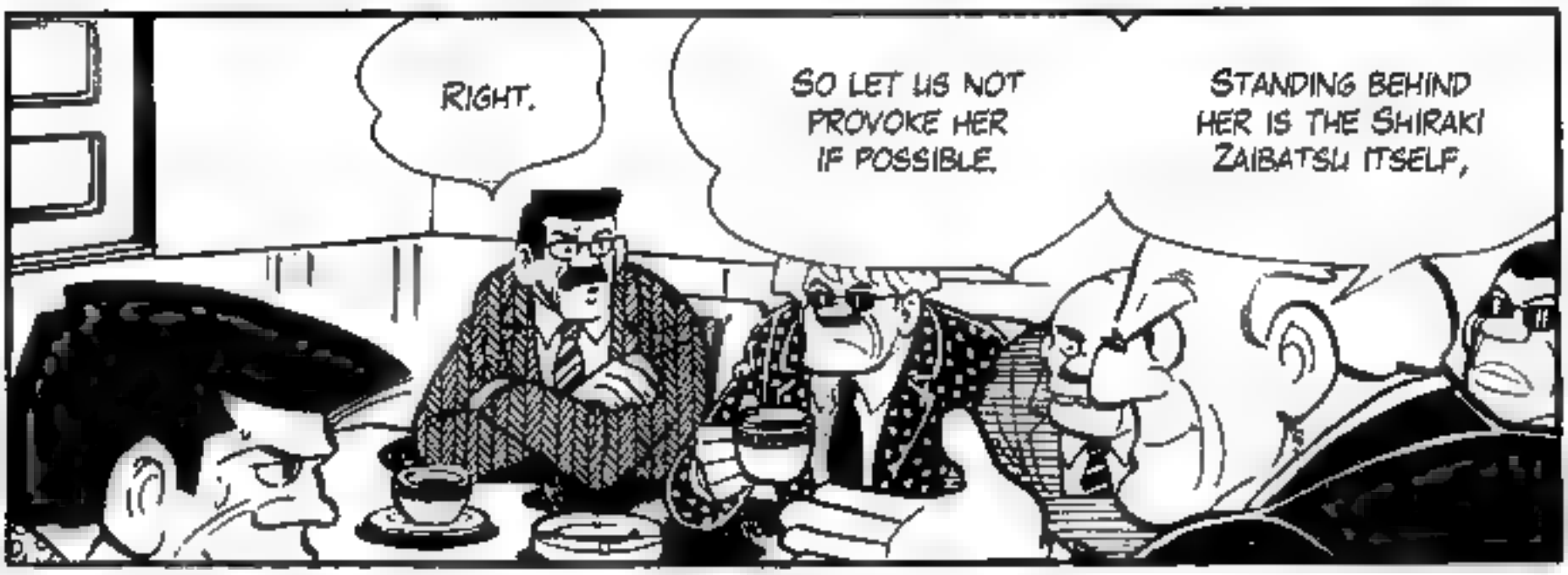
HOWEVER, I WOULD NEVER RESORT TO SUCH CHILDISH RICKS IN ACCOMPLISHING THAT.

EXCUSE ME, THEN.

BUT I WILL SAY THIS. THE GOAL OF MY SHIRAKI GYM, TOO, IS TO CRUSH YABUKI JOE!

QUIET, SHE'LL HEAR YOU...


THE HELL DOES THAT PAMPERED LITTLE RICH GIRL THINK SHE CAN DO!?
TALK ABOUT ARROGANT...
HMPH, DAMN THAT WOMAN.


RIGHT.
SO LET US NOT PROVOKE HER IF POSSIBLE.
STANDING BEHIND HER IS THE SHIRAKI ZAIBATSU ITSELF,

GOOD DAY, MISS.

AHH,

. . . .

. . . .

CONGRA-TULATIONS.

I HEAR YOU'VE BECOME THE NEW OWNER OF SHIRAKI GYM.

YES, THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONCERN...

IF YOU DON'T OPEN HIS EYES SOON, HE'LL BE DESTROYED BEFORE YOU KNOW IT.

THINGS MIGHT BE SMOOTH SAILING FOR YABUKI PRESENTLY, BUT DON'T EXPECT IT TO LAST FOREVER, MR. TANGE.

WAIT, WHAT?

. . . . .

COME IN.

HMM..

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU ALL HERE!

A FINE DAY TO YOU, GENTLEMEN!

O-OH, IS THAT SO? MY MISTAKE...

I THOUGHT I HAD ARRIVED 15 MINUTES EARLIER TO THE SCHEDULED MEETING TIME...

LATE?

IN ANY CASE, JUST TAKE A SEAT RIGHT HERE.

A LITTLE LATE, AREN'T YOU?

WHAT'S BEEN DECIDED?

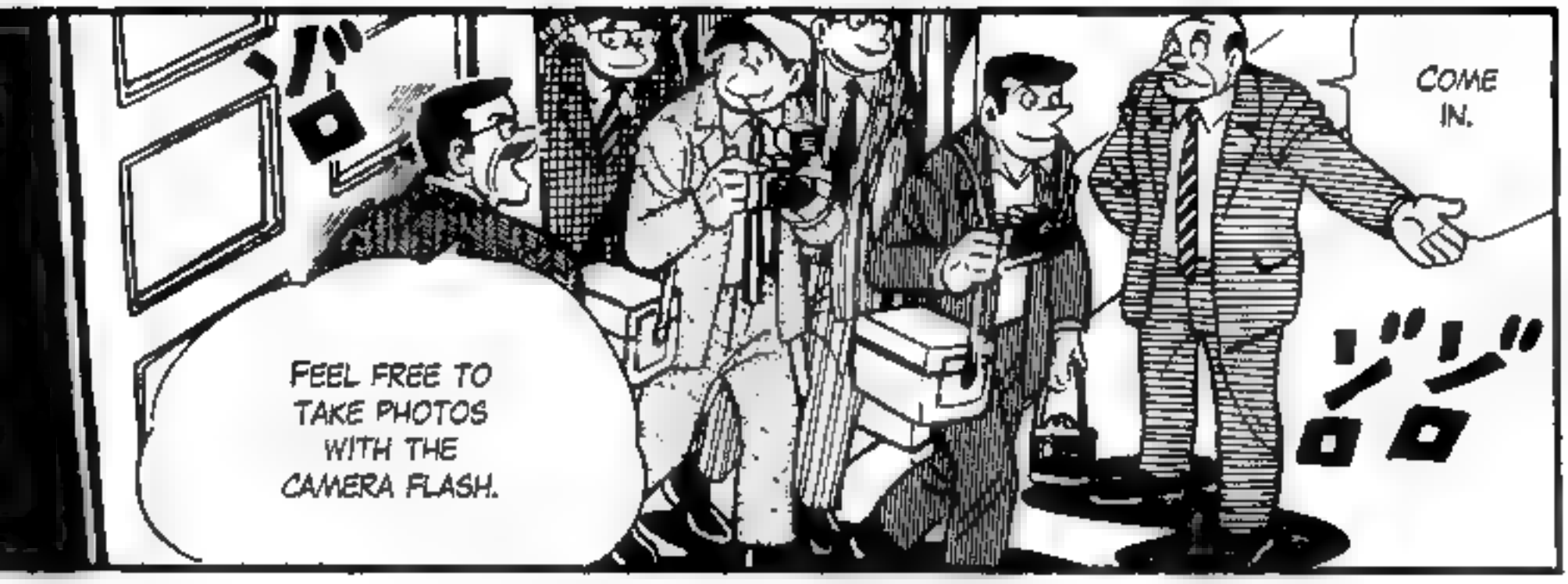
ISSUE?

AH YES, GOOD IDEA.

REPORTERS?

I BELIEVE WE SHOULD LET THOSE REPORTERS INSIDE.

SINCE THAT "ISSUE" HAS BEEN DECIDED,

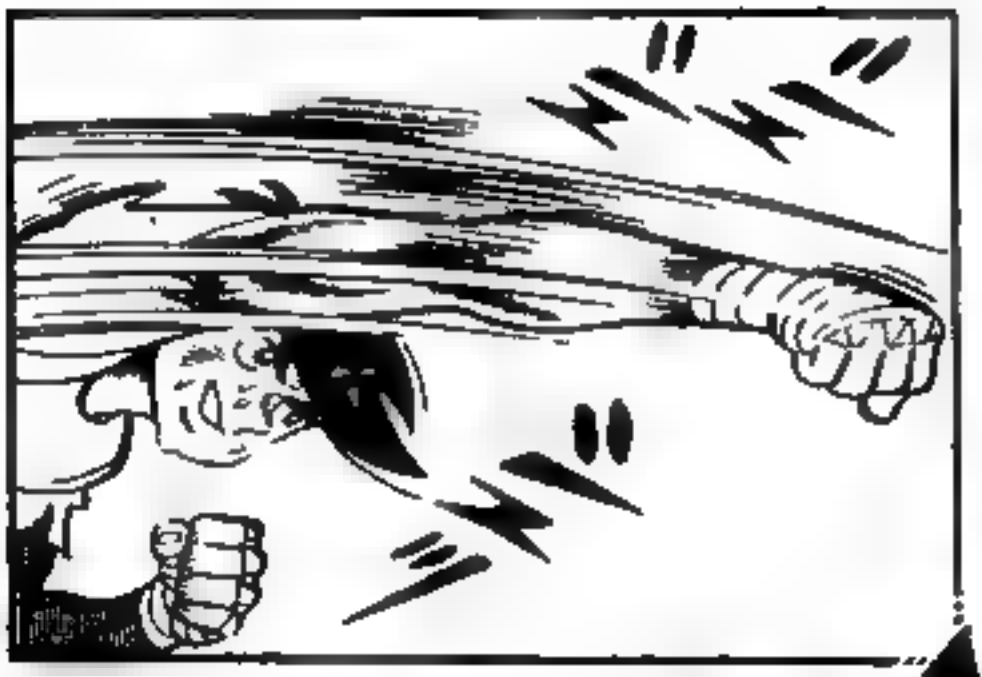

FEEL FREE TO TAKE PHOTOS WITH THE CAMERA FLASH.
COME IN.

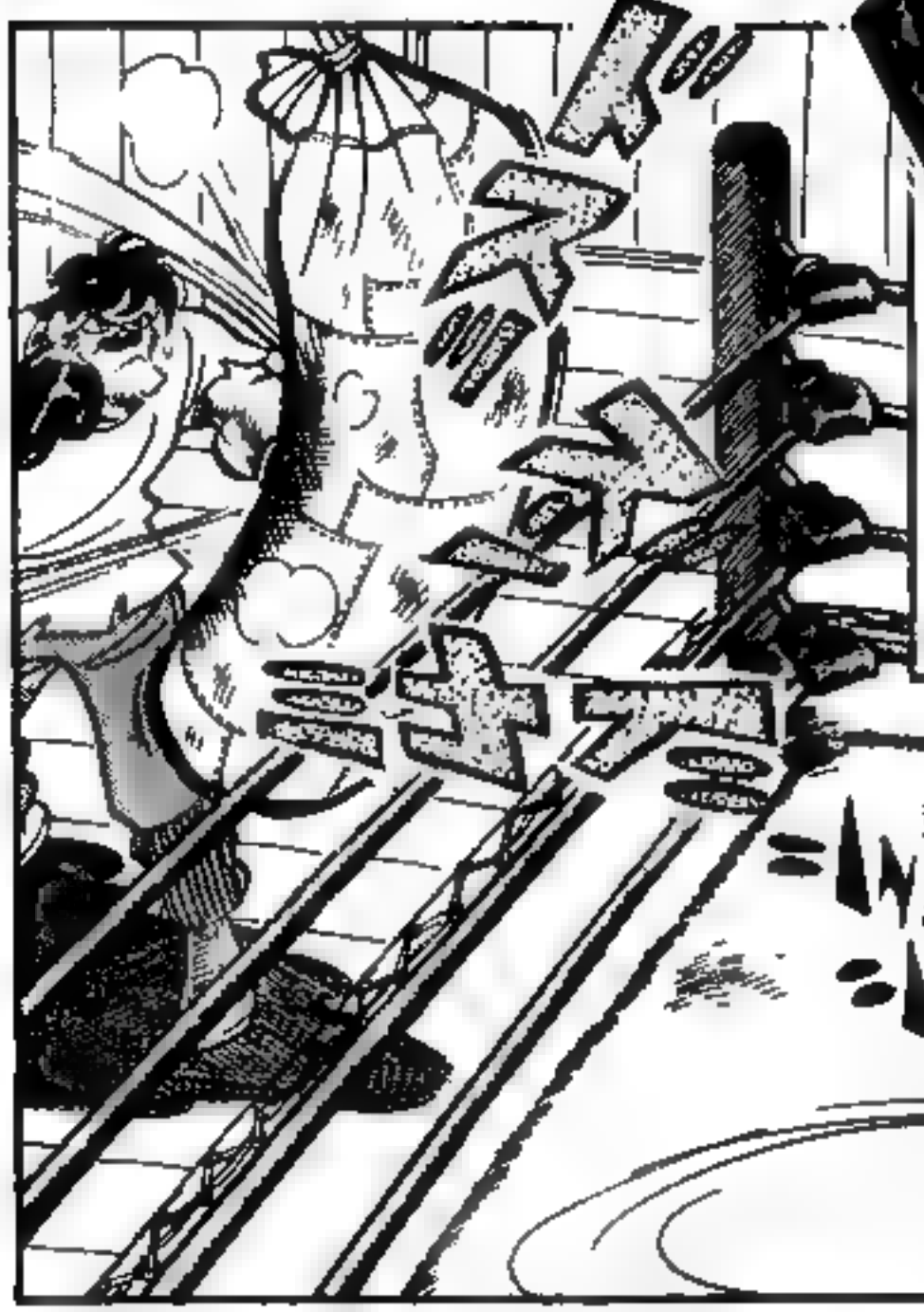
HA HA...
THAN YABUKI JOE'S NEXT MATCH!
TODAY, WE'D LIKE TO ANNOUNCE NONE OTHER,
HAHAHA, IT FINALLY FEELS LIKE WE'VE GOT A REAL IMPORTANT CONFERENCE NOW THAT ALL THE REPORTERS ARE HERE!
J-JOE'S NEXT MATCH...!?

円下拳闘クラブ
ドドドドドド
AH!
TAKE THAT!

HOW LONG DO THEY HAVE TO PRACTICE BEFORE THEY'RE SATISFIED?
THOSE TWO DON'T EVER QUIT, DO THEY...

NO ENTRY WHILE TRAINING





PANT
PANT
HAH
HAH
HAH

ALRIGHT THEN!

AND CLEAN UP THE GYM!

TIME TO CHANGE INTO A DRY T-SHIRT,

WHEW, I'M DRENCHED IN SWEAT.

RIGHT.

LET'S FINISH IT HERE FOR TODAY.

JOE, IT'S ABOUT TIME.

HEY! PRACTICE IS OVER SO WHO'S UP FOR A GAME!?

THEY'RE STILL WAITING?

JUST LEAVE THE CLEANING TO ME AND GO PLAY WITH THEM.

YOU KNOW, THOSE KIDS HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR HOURS OUT THERE FOR YOU.

HOW ABOUT... CLEANING?

HIDE-AND-SEEK?

WHAT KIND OF GAME?

ALRIGHT!

SET...
READY,
THE REST OF YOU CAN USE THE TOWELS TO WIPE.
HERE'S YOUR MOP, TARO.
C-CLEANING?
THE HELL AM I DOING...
GUESS WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE.
GO!
HAHA..
UGH..
WELL DONE!
RIGHT!?
SEE, DOESN'T TAKE TOO LONG IF EVERYONE'S HELPING OUT,
W-WE'RE DONE...
HUFF HUFF

WOOHOO!

EVERYONE OUTSIDE!

NOW LET'S PLAY FOR REAL!

AGHH!

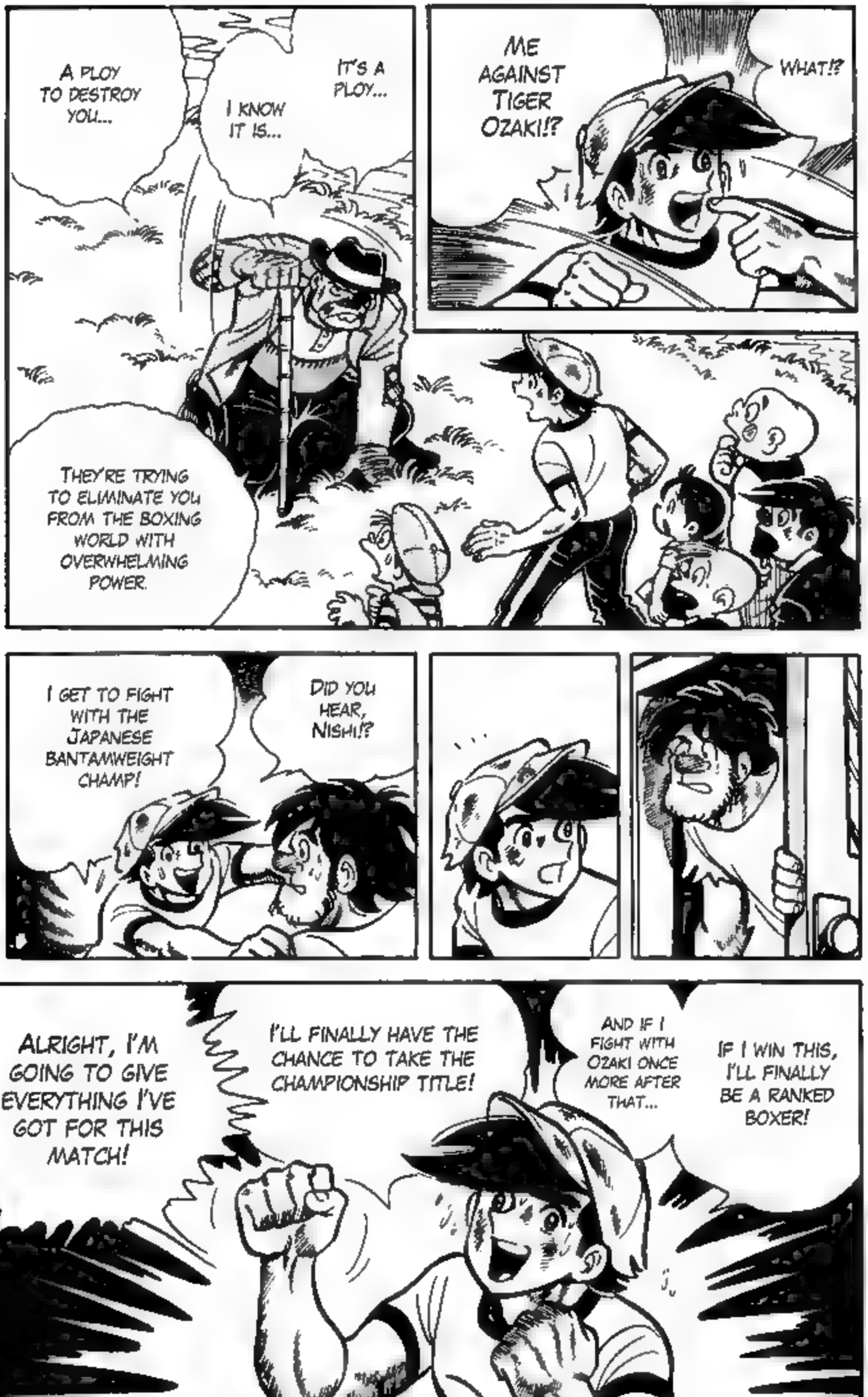
WELCOME BACK!

UHH, WEL...

O-OLD MAN...?

IS SOMETHING WRONG? WHAT'S WITH THAT FACE?

UHH,


A PLOY TO DESTROY YOU...
I KNOW IT IS...
IT'S A PLOY...
THEY'RE TRYING TO ELIMINATE YOU FROM THE BOXING WORLD WITH OVERWHELMING POWER.
ME AGAINST TIGER OZAKI!?
WHAT!?
I GET TO FIGHT WITH THE JAPANESE BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMP!
DID YOU HEAR, NISHI!?
ALRIGHT, I'M GOING TO GIVE EVERYTHING I'VE GOT FOR THIS MATCH!
I'LL FINALLY HAVE THE CHANCE TO TAKE THE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE!
AND IF I FIGHT WITH OZAKI ONCE MORE AFTER THAT...
IF I WIN THIS, I'LL FINALLY BE A RANKED BOXER!

YEAH, WHAT A CON!

WE EVEN HELPED YOU CLEAN THE GYM!

THAT'S NOT FAIR!

IT'S TIME FOR SPECIAL TRAINING!

NO TIME FOR PLAYING!

GOTTA BEAT TIGER!

GOTTA BEAT THE CHAMP!

I'LL MAKE THAT BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP BELT MINE IN NO TIME!

I'M SURE HE CAN HANDLE EVEN THE CHAMP SOMEHOW!

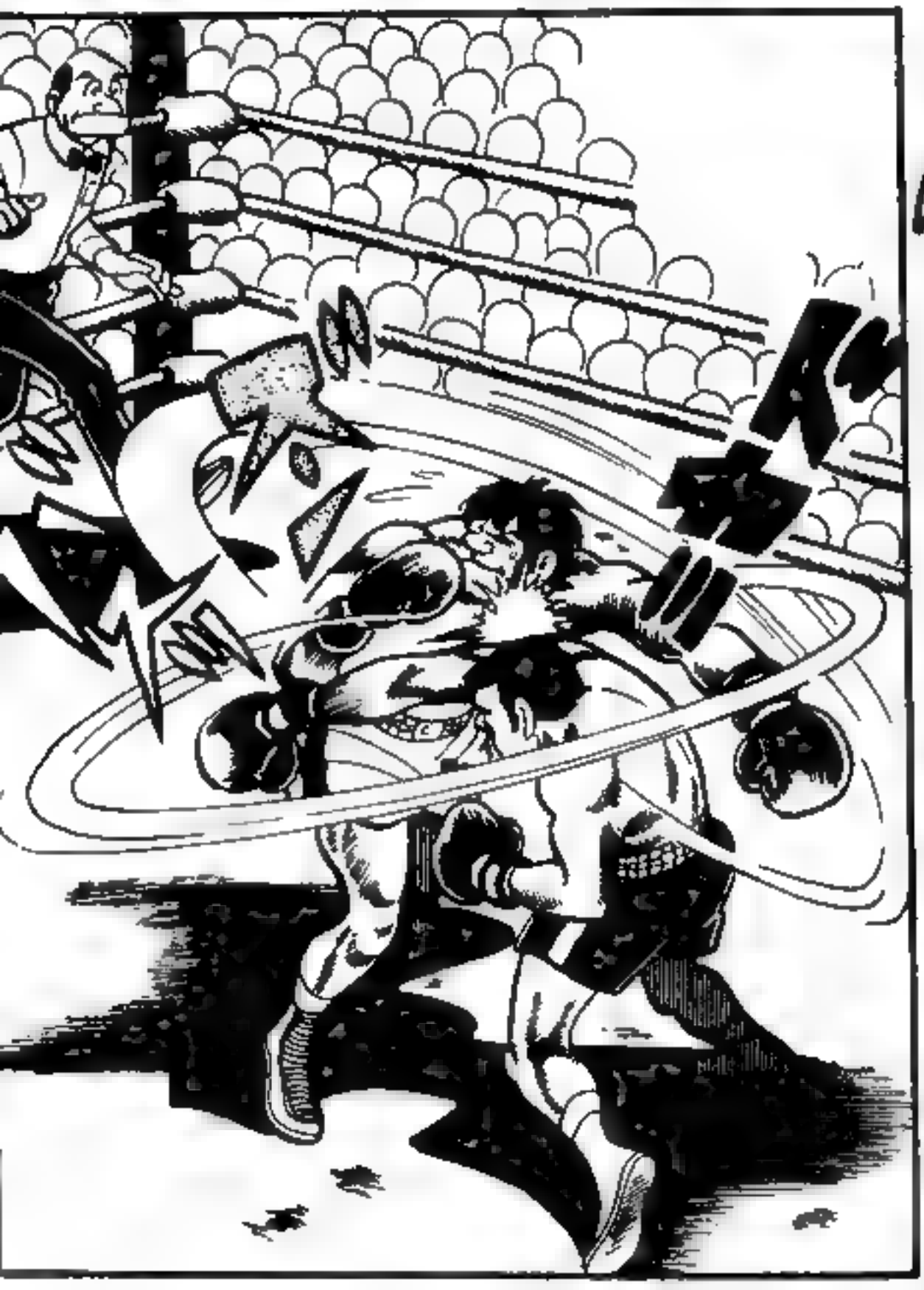
JUST LOOK AT JOE RIGHT NOW! LOOK AT THAT SPIRIT AND ENERGY!

NO NEED TO BE SO DEPRESSED, OLD MAN!

…

JOE'S ALREADY FIRED UP FOR THE MATCH...

IT'S JUST AS THEY PLANNED..



TANGE DANPEI AND YABUKI JOE WERE, AS USUAL, SERVING AS NISHI'S CORNER MEN.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, NISHI!? THIS IS THE FINAL ROUND SO PUSH HARDER!

YOUR RIGHT! PUNCH WITH YOUR RIGHT ARM!

HEY JOE! I DON'T THINK YOUR YELLING'S HELPING ALL THAT MUCH AT ALL!

JUST LOOK! NISHI'S LOOKING EVEN MORE TENSE BECAUSE OF YOU!

WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL THAT ENERGY A MINUTE AGO!?

USE A RIGHT ALREADY, YOU IDIOT!

SHUT THE HELL UP!

AHAHA HAHA!

KEEP ON YELLING LIKE THAT AND YOU WON'T EVEN HAVE ANY ENERGY TO FIGHT TIGER OZAKI!

UGH, IT'S OVER...

STOP!

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU JUST LET IT END LIKE THAT, AFTER SAYING YOU'D KNOCK HIM OUT BY THE 3RD ROUND WHEN THE MATCH STARTED!

THE HELL WAS THAT, NISHI!?

...YOU ALRIGHT? YOU'RE NOT LOOKING TOO WELL.

NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...

WELL, WHATEVER. JUST SIT DOWN.

YOUR RIGHT HAND!?

HMM... MAYBE YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE OUT OF IT FROM BEING ON SUCH A STRICT WEIGHT LOSS REGIMEN FOR SO LONG.

MY RIGHT HAND'S BEEN HURTING FOR A LITTLE WHILE...

NO, IT'S JUST...

WINNER: MAMMOTH!

T-THANK YOU...

THANK YOU...

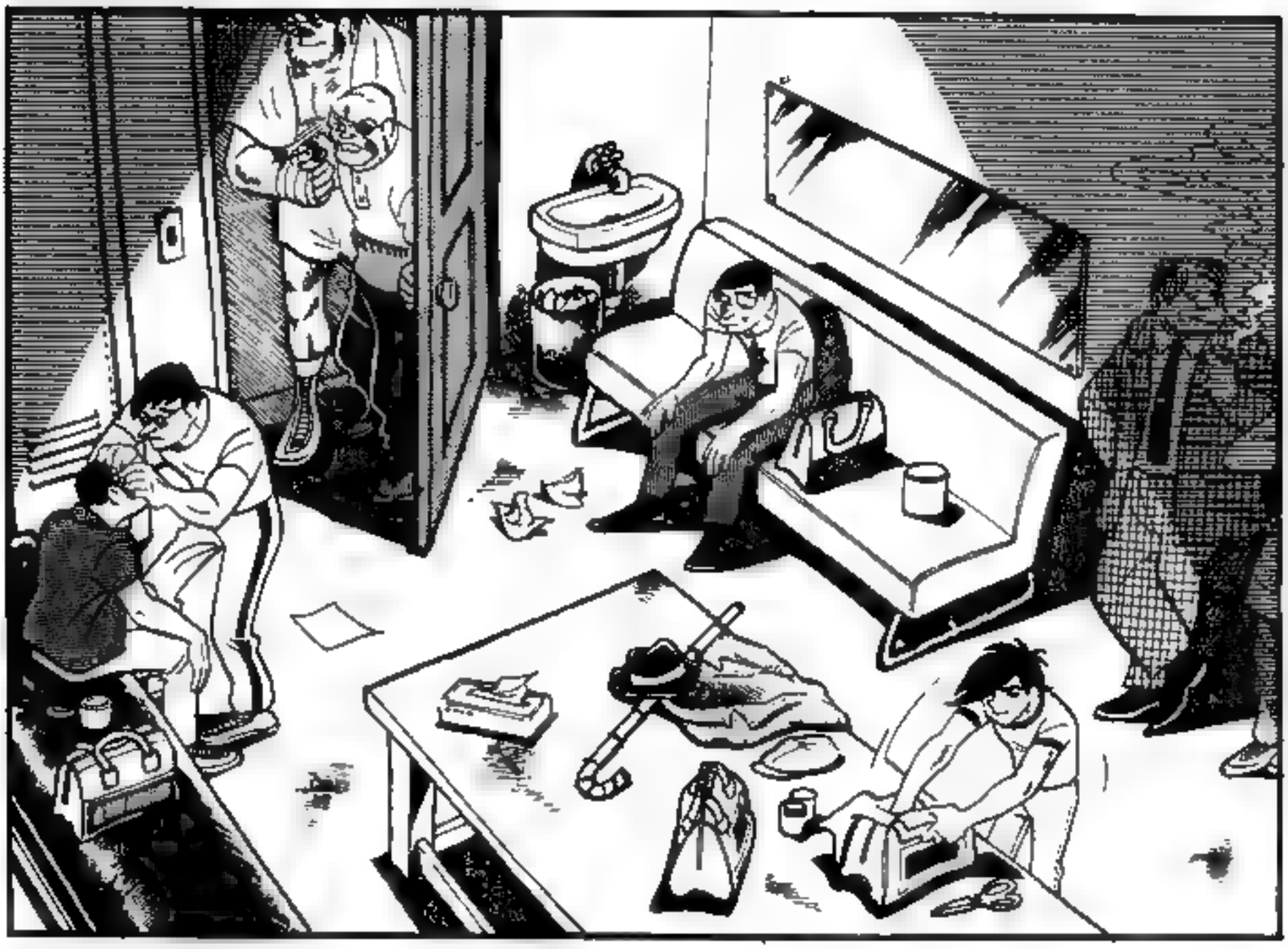
GOOD, AT LEAST YOU WON.

HEH.

NOW FOR TONIGHT'S MAIN EVENT...

A 10-ROUND MATCH BETWEEN THE 2ND RANKED PACIFIC JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT--

EXIT

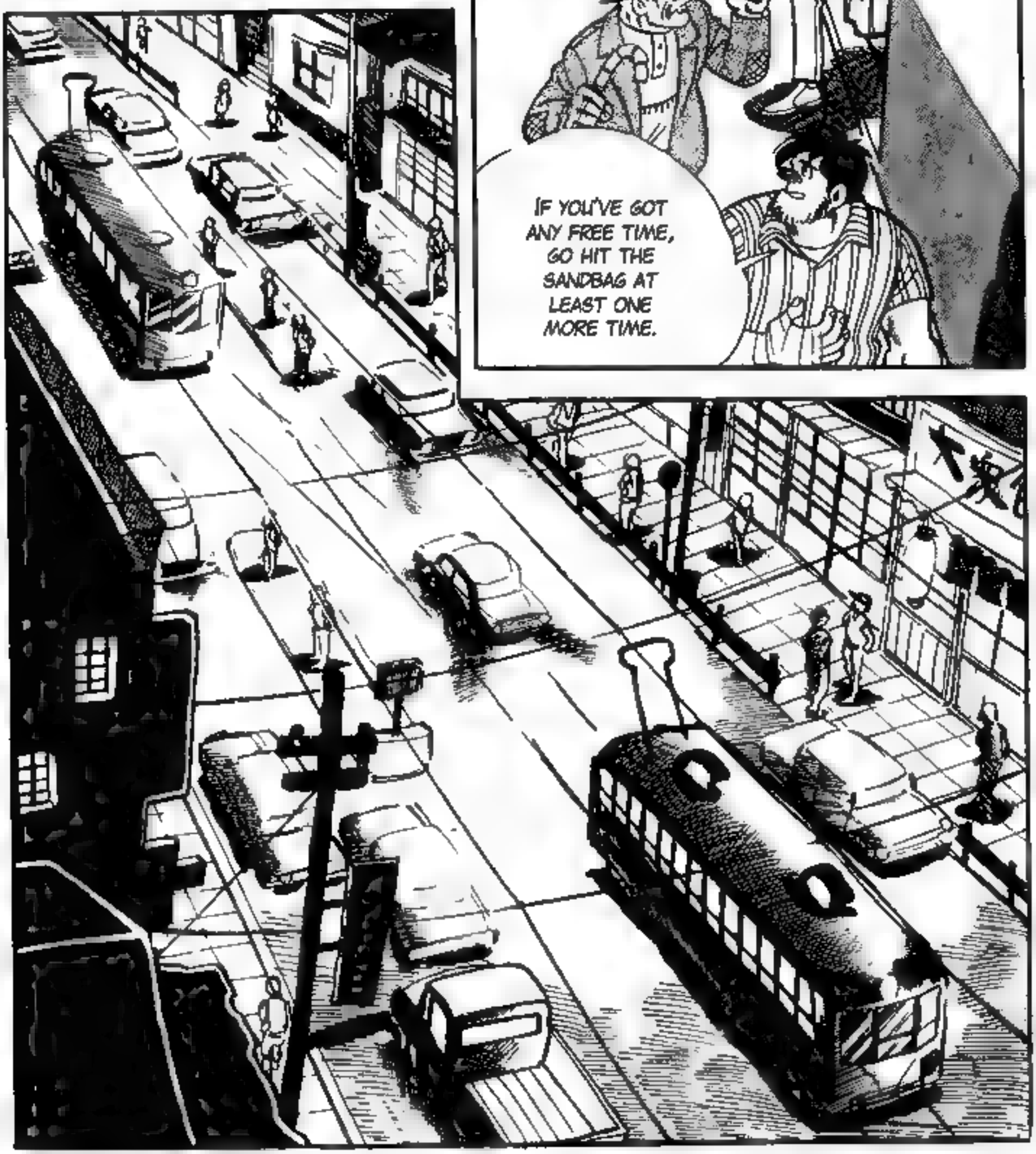


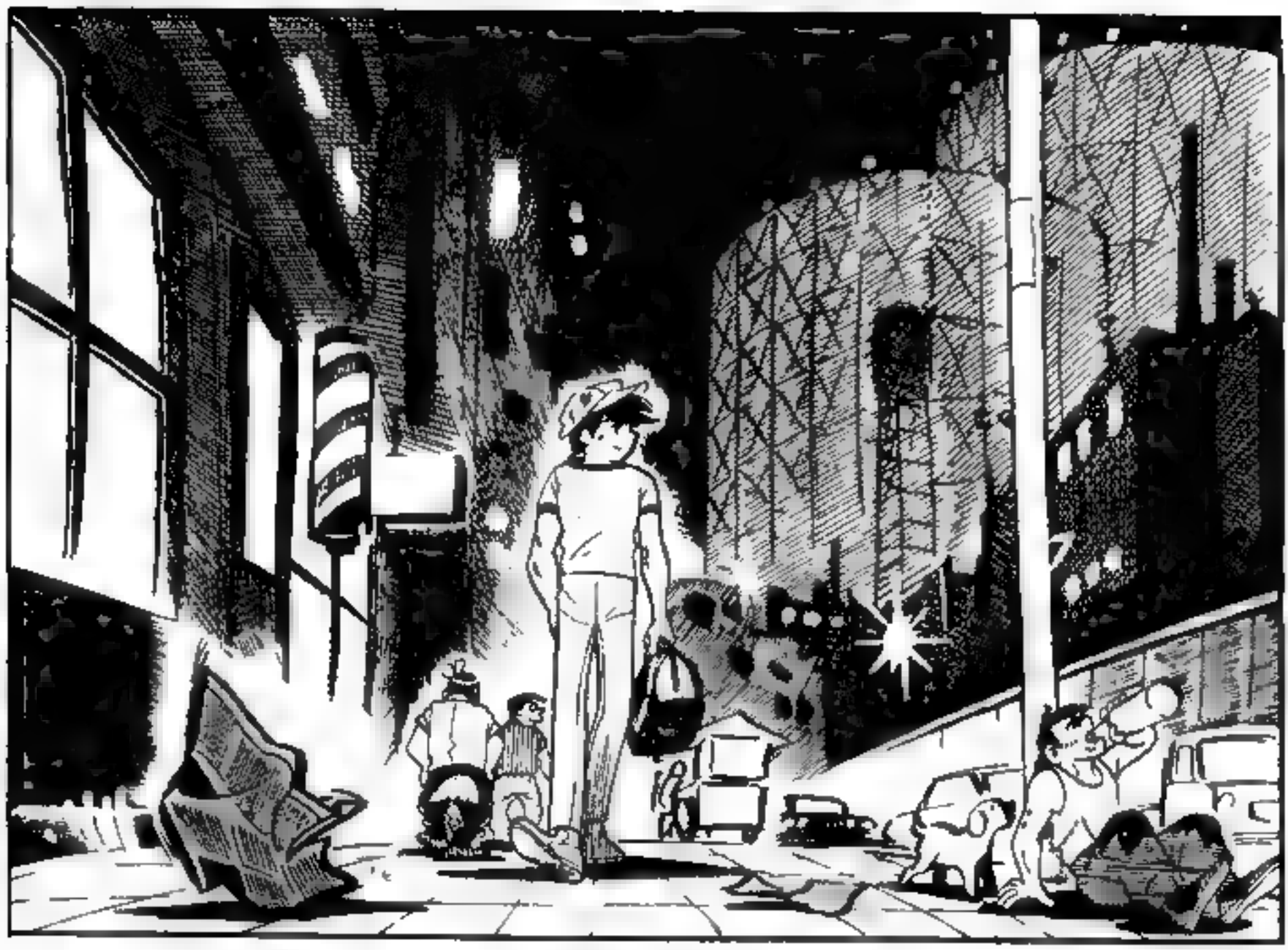
HE SAID I'D BETTER GO TO A HOSPITAL AND GET AN X-RAY...
WHAT'D THE DOCTOR SAY?

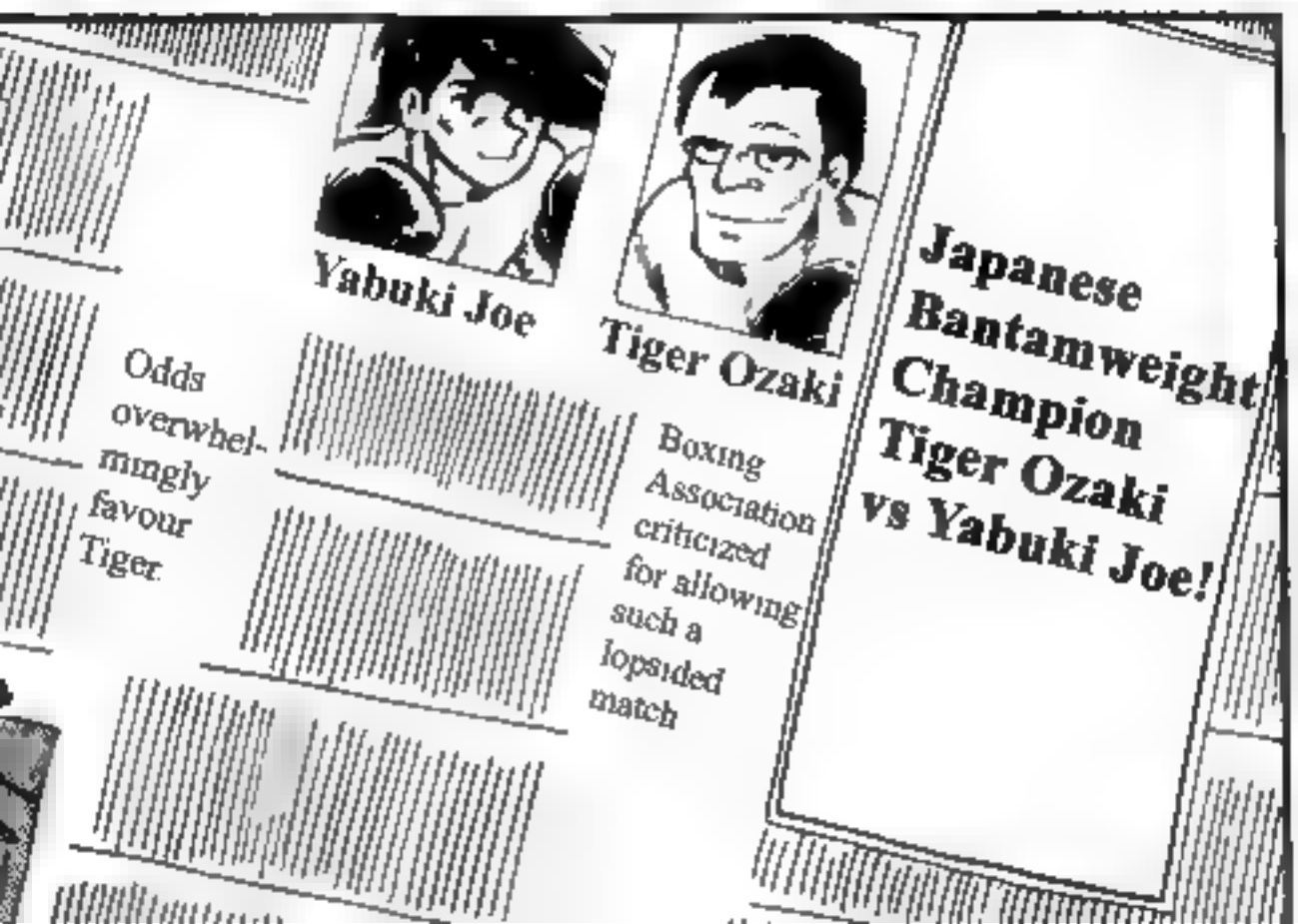
I'LL TAKE NISHI TO THE HOSPITAL.
WHATEVER IT IS, YOU JUST HEAD HOME BY YOURSELF TODAY.
DON'T TELL ME IT'S A FRACTURE...

...

NO, NO. YOU'RE NOT FORGETTING THAT YOUR MATCH WITH TIGER IS DRAWING CLOSER AND CLOSER, RIGHT?
WHAT? I'LL COME TOO.
IF YOU'VE GOT ANY FREE TIME, GO HIT THE SANDBAG AT LEAST ONE MORE TIME.






Yabuki Joe
Tiger Ozaki
Japanese Bantamweight Champion Tiger Ozaki vs Yabuki Joe!
Odds overwhelmingly favour Tiger.
Boxing Association criticized for allowing such a lopsided match

THE ODDS FAVOUR TIGER, DO THEY NOW?

HMPH.

HEH HEH. JUST YOU WAIT AND SEE...

OH, WELCOME BACK!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

WHERE'S MR. TANGE AND NISHI?

ガ

ガ

ガ

YOU'RE HERE.

OH,

THOUGH IT WAS JUST A WIN BY DECISION.

EVEN SO, NISHI ENDED UP WINNING THE MATCH.

OH NO.

SO THE TWO OF THEM WENT TO THE HOSPITAL.

NISHI HURT HIS HAND DURING THE MATCH,

THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR...

HERE'S YOUR TRAINING SHIRT AND PANTS.

OH, YOU'RE GOING TO PRACTICE NOW, RIGHT?

S-SORRY...

I NEVER HAVE TO FIX UP NISHI'S CLOTHES BUT YOURS ARE ALWAYS GETTING RIPPED HERE AND THERE.

YOU REALLY ARE A ROUGH BOXER, YOU KNOW.

SEE YOU ON SUNDAY THEN.

RIGHT...

I'VE ALREADY MADE DINNER SO ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS HEAT IT UP.

WELL, I'LL HEAD ON HOME SINCE I DON'T WANT TO BOTHER YOUR TRAINING.

I DID...?

YOU PROMISED ME WE'D GO TO THE FLOWER VIEWING AT MUROJIMA.

DID YOU FORGET?

SUNDAY?

WASN'T THAT NISHI WHO PROMISED?

OH THAT?

SO YOU PROMISED TO GO THIS SUNDAY INSTEAD.

LAST TIME YOU SAID YOU COULDN'T GO BECAUSE OF NISHI'S UPCOMING MATCH,

OH, COME ON.

YOU UNDERSTAND, RIGHT?

WELL, I REALLY DON'T HAVE TIME TO PLAY AROUND LIKE THAT RIGHT NOW.

IS THAT SO?

YOU WERE THERE RIGHT BESIDE NISHI AND SAID YOU'D COME ALONG AS WELL.

NO,

LIAR.

BUT HAVE FUN GOING WITH NISHI.

I'VE GOTTA STEAL THAT CHAMPIONSHIP BELT FROM TIGER OZAKI...

GOOD BYE THEN!

I NEVER LI-

LIAR?

HARD AT WORK, I SEE.
FRACTURE?
BUT I DO HAVE A SLIGHT FRACTURE.
THEY SAID IT WASN'T TOO SERIOUS,
HOW'S UHH... HOW'S YOUR HAND?
MNN...
WHEN A BOXER STARTS GETTING FRACTURES ON A REGULAR BASIS, THAT'S THE END OF HIS CAREER.
YOU SHOULD BE CAREFUL TOO.
COMB YOUR HAIR PROPERLY TOO.
WHY DON'T YOU SHAVE FOR ONCE AND TAKE HER ALONG?
OH RIGHT.
HEY, BY THE WAY, NORIKO WAS MAKING A BIG FUSS ABOUT GOING TO SEE SOME FLOWER VIEWING.

YOU'RE GOING TOO, RIGHT?

OH, DID NORIKO COME BY AND ALREADY MAKE DINNER FOR US?

I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH SPARE TIME TO GO LOOK AT SOME FLOWERS!

ARE YOU KIDDIN' ME!?

円下拳闘クラブ

拳闘クラブ

GOOD!
AND RIGHT!
NOW YOUR LEFT!
TWIST THAT RIGHT A LITTLE MORE!

HAVE NISHI WIPE YOU OFF.

STOP!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

SO PUT MORE ENERGY INTO YOUR TRAINING!

YOUR NEXT MATCH IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER BOXER YOU'VE FACED.

YOU DON'T SEEM VERY INTO IT...

WHAT'S WRONG?

HOW THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO PUT MORE ENERGY WHEN ALL I'VE GOT IS AN OLD MAN WITH MITTS ON!?

JUST LIKE THE TIME WITH WOLF.

LOOKS LIKE HE'S GETTING NERVOUS...

SICK AND TIRED, I TELL YA!

I'M TIRED OF JUST HITTIN' THE SANDBAGS OR THE PUNCHING BALL!

SO THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS GET ME A PROPER SPARRING PARTNER!

I'M SAYING THIS BECAUSE, LIKE YOU SAID, MY NEXT MATCH IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER BOXER I'VE FACED!

I'M NOT SAYING THIS BECAUSE I'M NERVOUS!

WHA?

PERHAPS I COULD HELP YOU WITH THAT PROBLEM, YABUKI...

GOOD, GOOD...
HARD AT WORK, I SEE.

BOKUTOU BOXING CLUB'S...
Y-YOU'RE...
IF A SPARRING PARTNER IS WHAT YOU NEED, THEN MY GYM'S YOUR ANSWER!
YES, MY BOKUTOU GYM HAS MANY FINE BANTAMWEIGHT BOXERS SUCH AS YOURSELF.

WHAT DID YOU COME HERE FOR...?

HAHA! DID YOU HEAR THAT, OLD MAN!?

OH, JUST TO GIVE A FRIENDLY GREETING.

THAT, AND TO CHECK UP ON YOUR PRIZED YABUKI JOE, SINCE I WAS A LITTLE WORRIED TO HEAR HE WAS SCHEDULED TO FIGHT THE CHAMPION TIGER OZAKI.

SO HOW ABOUT IT? WOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT MY GYM TO DO SOME SPARRING?

WE HAVE OUR OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS AROUND HERE.

OUR GYM MAY BE SMALL BUT WE'VE NEVER ONCE HAD TO RELY ON OTHERS FOR HELP AND THAT'S THE WAY IT'LL CONTINUE TO BE.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR OFFER BUT WE'LL HAVE TO DECLINE.

I'M GONNA VISIT BOKUTOU GYM.

WHAT?

COME ON THEN, JOE.

LET'S RESUME OUR TRAINING.

FRIENDLY...!?

NOT POLITE TO TURN DOWN A FRIENDLY OFFER, YOU KNOW.

NO REASON TO TURN HIM DOWN WHEN HE CAME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TO GIVE US EXACTLY WHAT I WANTED.

THE SPARRING'S JUST AN EXCUSE FOR SOME OTHER TRICK THEY'RE PLANNING...

YOU DO REALIZE THAT HE'S ONE OF THE PEOPLE CONSPIRING TO RUIN YOU, RIGHT!?

JOE, THINK THROUGH THIS ONE MORE TIME!

NOT ONLY THAT, I'VE GOTTA THANK HIM FOR HIS HELP IN SETTING UP THE MATCH BETWEEN ME AND TIGER! HEH HEH.

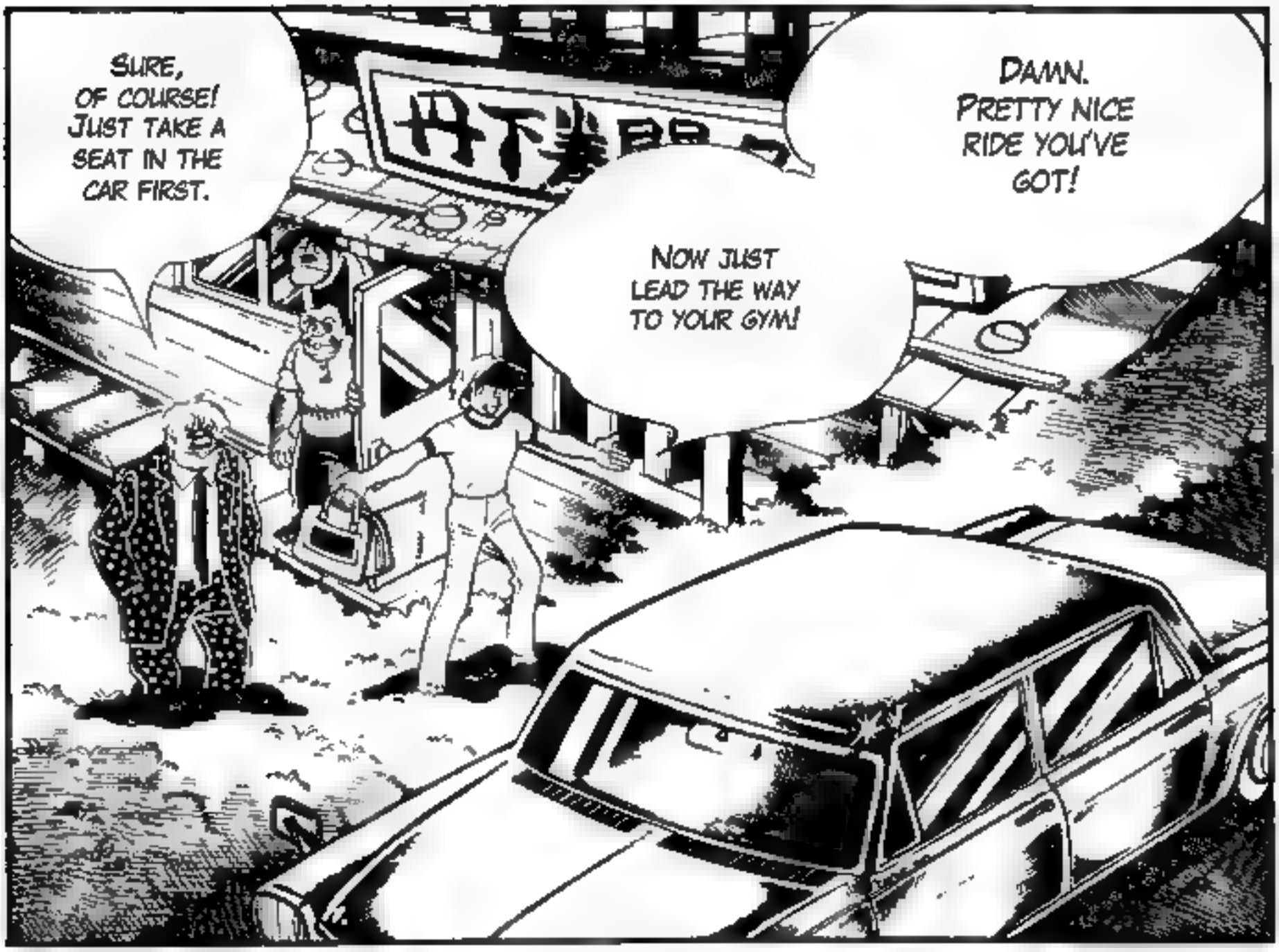
EITHER WAY, I'M FINE! IF THEY WANNA CRUSH ME, THEN LET'EM TRY!

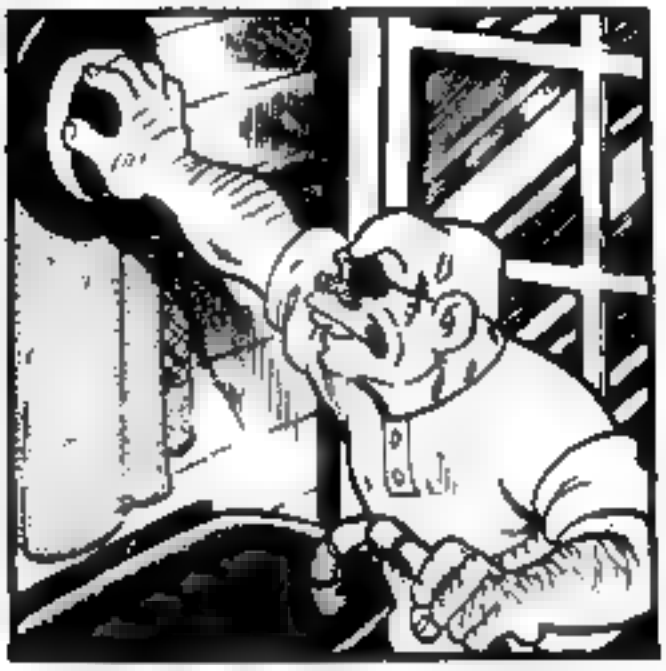
NO NEED TO BE SO PARANOID.

JOE...

DON'T FORGET TO TAKE NORIKO TO GO SEE THEM FLOWERS.

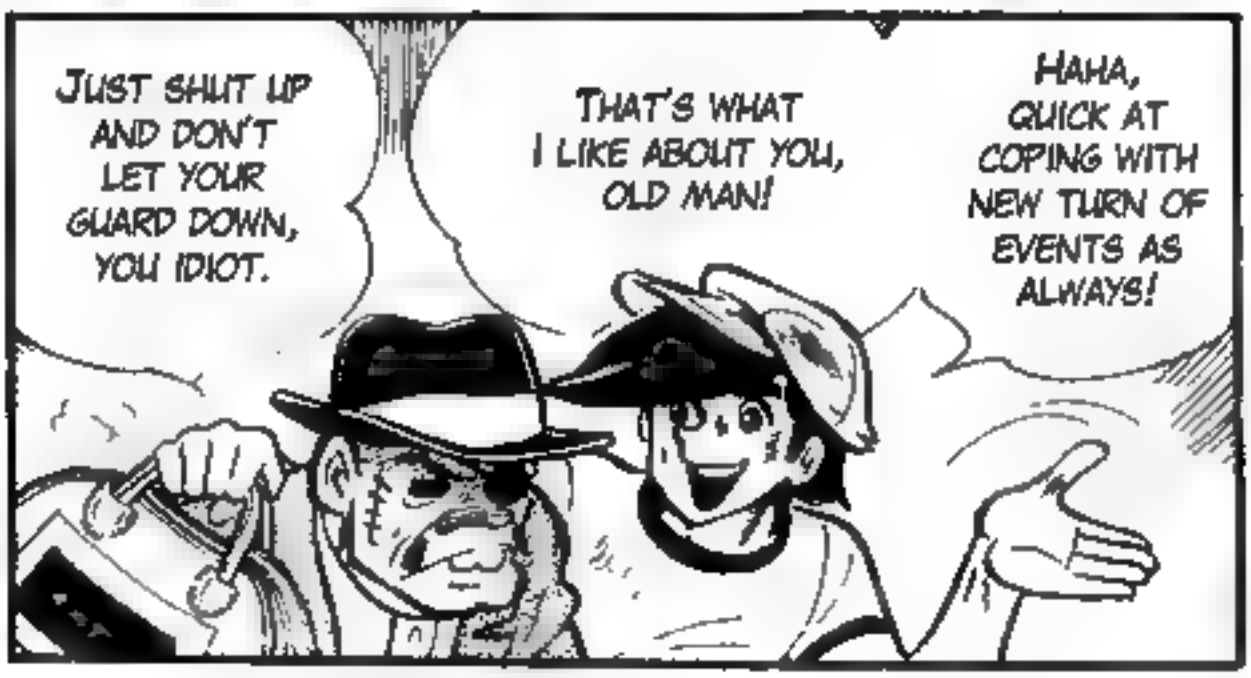
I'LL BE ON MY WAY THEN.


SURE, OF COURSE! JUST TAKE A SEAT IN THE CAR FIRST.
NOW JUST LEAD THE WAY TO YOUR GYM!
DAMN. PRETTY NICE RIDE YOU'VE GOT!



STILL GONNA COMPLAIN?
WHAT?

W-WAIT!


JUST SHUT UP AND DON'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN, YOU IDIOT.
THAT'S WHAT I LIKE ABOUT YOU, OLD MAN!
HAHA, QUICK AT COPING WITH NEW TURN OF EVENTS AS ALWAYS!

I'LL COME ALONG TOO.

Bokutou Boxing Club

I'D RATHER IF YOU DIDN'T COMPARE MY GYM TO YOURS.
I MEAN, IT'S DEFINITELY A WHOLE LOT BETTER THAN OURS, RIGHT?
WELL... MAYBE NOT AS GOOD AS THE SHIRAKI OR ASIA GYMS, BUT IT'S STILL PRETTY NICE.
WHOA, THIS PLACE LOOKS PRETTY DAMN SWEET!

JUST LISTENING TO IT IS STARTING TO GET ME EXCITED.

SOUNDS LIKE HARD WORK IN THERE.

N-NO-NO-NO

HOW YA DOIN'!?
HEY GUYS!
I'VE BROUGHT THEM TO OUR GYM TODAY BECAUSE THEY UNFORTUNATELY LACKED A SUITABLE SPARRING PARTNER AT THEIR PLACE.
BUT THIS IS TANGE GYM'S OWNER AND YABUKI JOE.
I'M SURE YOU ALL KNOW ALREADY,
THAT'S HOW IT IS, PEOPLE! SO YOU BETTER SHOW ME A REAL GOOD TIME, IF YOU KNOW WHAT I'M SAYIN'!

DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE A LITTLE TOO PUDGY FOR A LIGHTWEIGHT?

SO YOU'RE A LIGHTWEIGHT, HUH?

I'M FINE, THANK YOU.

NO NEED TO BE SO TENSE.

HERE, HAVE SOME TEA.

ARE YOU DEAF? I SAID SPAR WITH HIM!

HOW ABOUT SPARRING WITH YABUKI FOR 2-3 ROUNDS?

HEY, INO! YOU'RE A BANTAMWEIGHT, RIGHT?

OH, SO WE'RE STARTING RIGHT AWAY?

YEAH, YOU AND AS FOR YOU, YABUKI, THE CHANGEROOM IS OVER THERE.

WAKE UP, DUDE.

M-ME...?

IN THE MEANWHILE, COULD YOU GET YOUR GUYS TO PREPARE THE OTHER EQUIPMENT AND GET ME A WATER BOTTLE?
IT AIN'T LIKE THERE'RE ANY GIRLS AROUND SO I'LL JUST CHANGE RIGHT HERE.

....

HEY! DON'T JUST STAND THERE AND STARE WITH YOUR MOUTHS OPEN!
GO BACK TO YOUR TRAINING!

'CAUSE I SURE AM!
YOU READY OVER THERE?

THE HELL ARE YOU GOING TO DO IF YOU GET YOURSELF INJURED WITH YOUR NEXT MATCH SO CLOSE!?
ARE YOU STUPID!?

OH C'MON. I AIN'T WEARING THOSE STUFFY THINGS FOR A LIL' SPAR.
WHERE'S YOUR HEADGEAR? OR YOUR MOUTHGUARD?
JOE, WAIT!

THAT COCKY SON OF A...

NGHH...

DON'T GET YOUR PANTIES IN A BUNCH. I'LL PUT 'EM ON FOR THE NEXT ROUND IF THIS GUY CAN ACTUALLY HURT ME.

HEY! SOMEBODY RING THE BELL SO WE CAN GET STARTED!

. . . .

THAT BOY DOESN'T LISTEN TO A WORD YOU SAY, DOES HE, TANGE?

FINALLY!

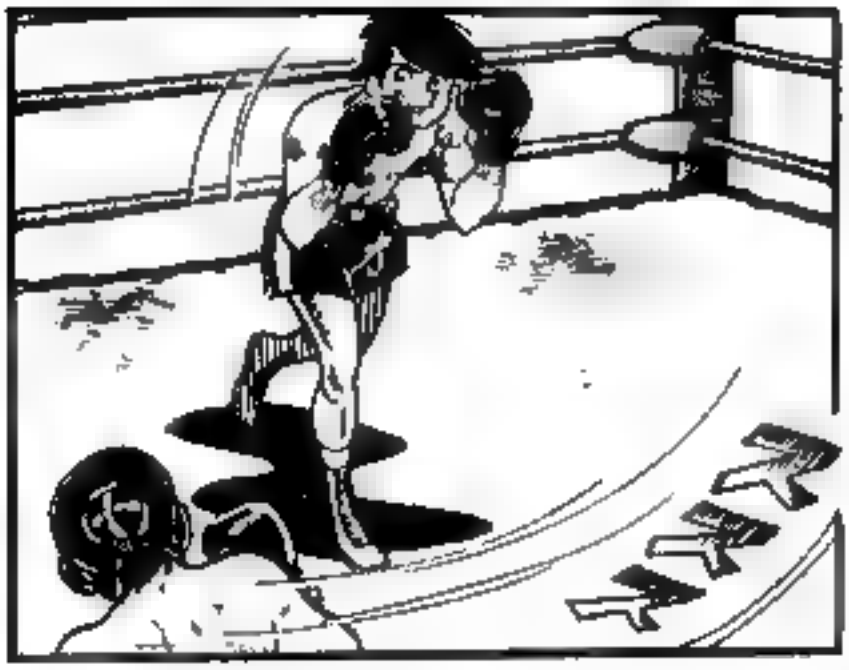
RINGING THE BELL THEN.

PFFT, YOU'RE GONNA BE NO FUN AT ALL.

WHAT'S WITH THAT TIMID-LOOKING DEFENSIVE STANCE?

DON'T YOU LOSE TO HIM!

C'MON, INO!



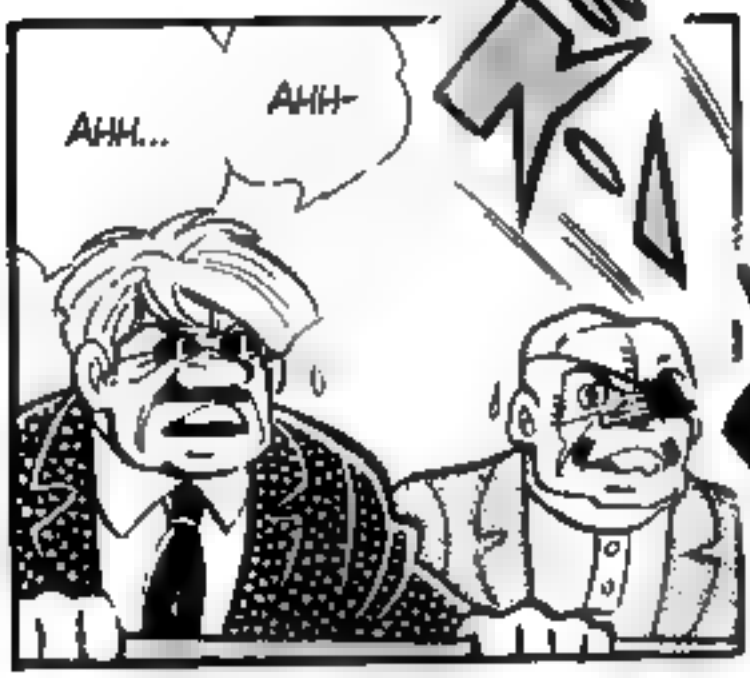
GO PHONE THEM NOW.
HE'S GETTING FULL OF HIMSELF AGAIN... I JUST HOPE THIS SPAR DOESN'T TURN DIRTY...
YES, SIR...

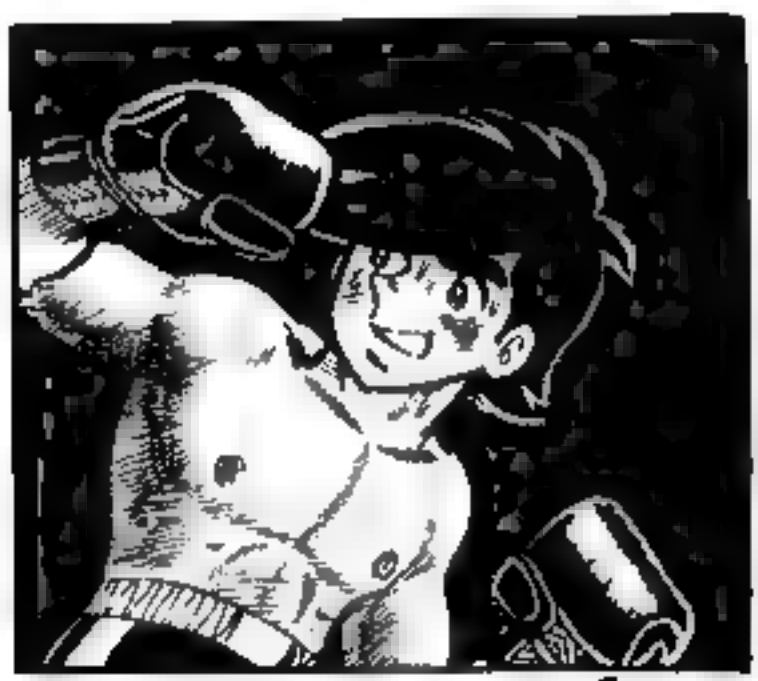
COME AT ME!
SERIOUSLY NOW? ARE YOU JUST GONNA CIRCLE AROUND THE ROPES ALL DAY?

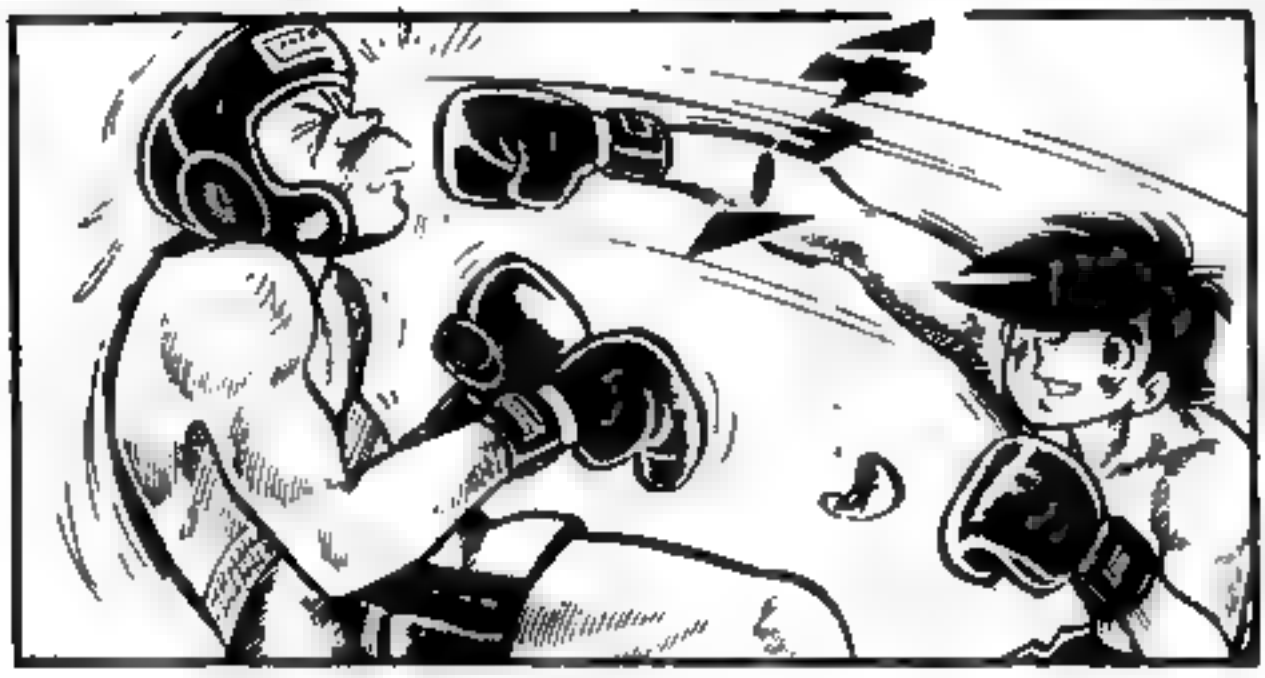
UGHH!

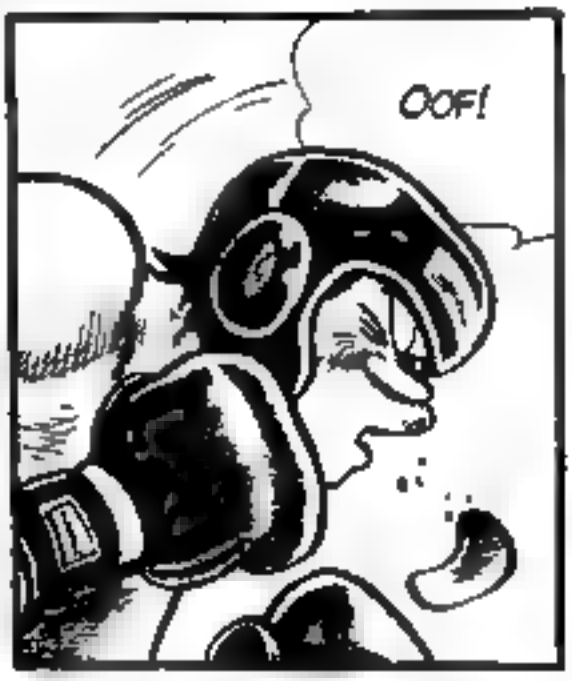
FINE, I'LL COME AT YOU THEN!

HOW'S THAT!?


AHH...
AHH-






OOF!

I-INO!

AGHH...

INO!?

ARE YOU ALRIGHT!?

OTHERWISE, IT'D BE THE SAME AS ME HITTING A BORING OL' SANDBAG.

J-JOE...

SEND ME SOMEONE WHO CAN FIGHT, WON'CHA?

YO, PREZ. THAT KID WAS NO GOOD AT ALL.

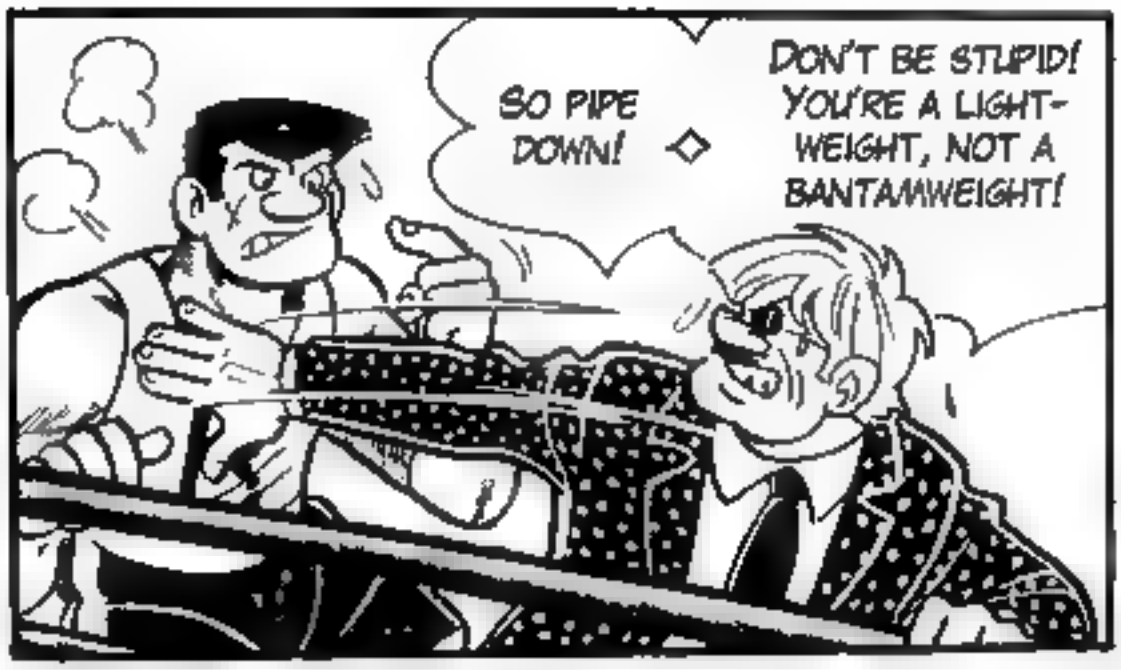
PLEASE, SIR!

SIR! LET ME FIGHT!

NGHH...

BASTARD...

YOU GO NEXT.
YASUTA!

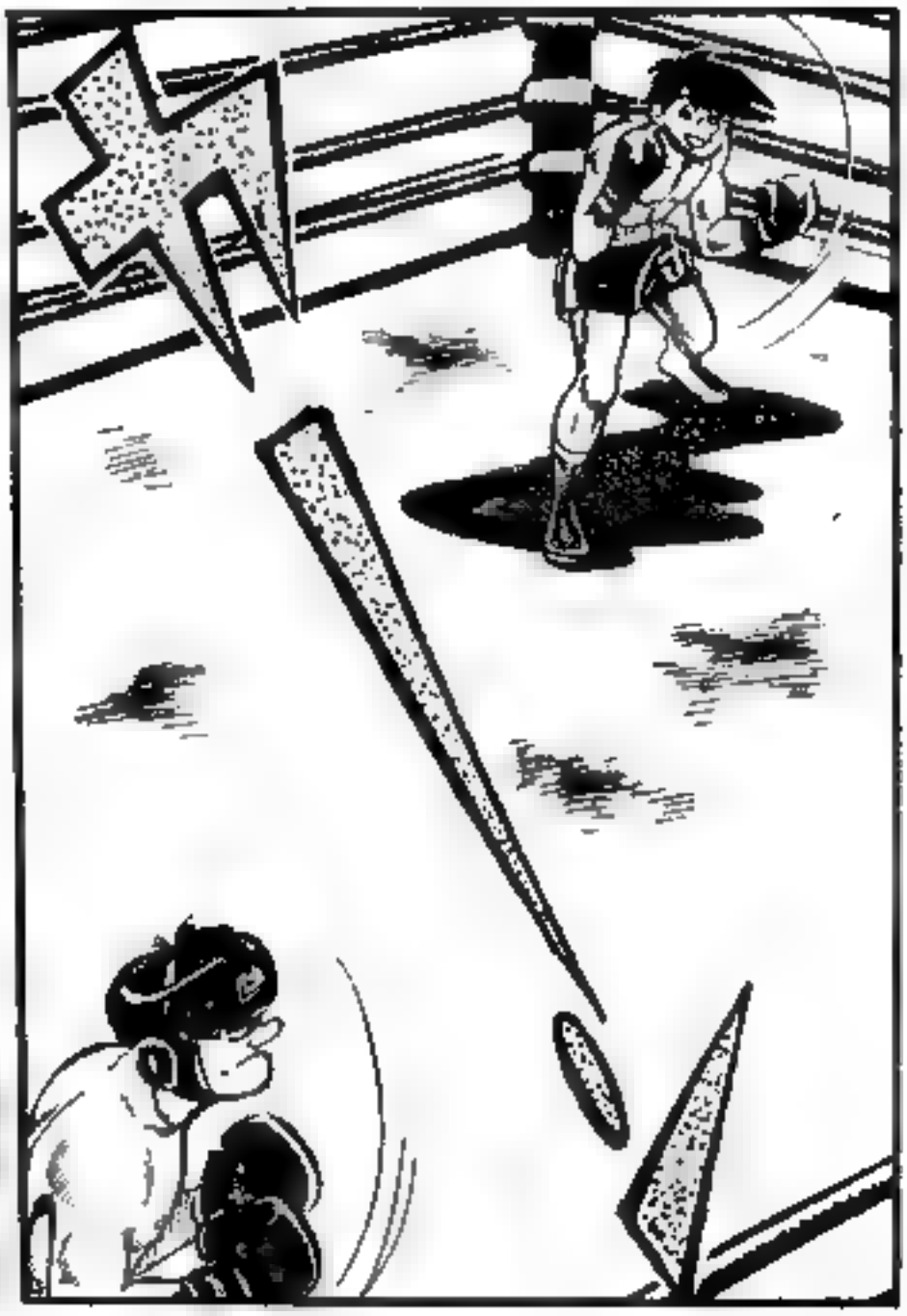

SO PIPE DOWN!
DON'T BE STUPID! YOU'RE A LIGHT-WEIGHT, NOT A BANTAMWEIGHT!

MY BODY'S STARTIN' TO COOL DOWN ALREADY.
HURRY IT UP OVER THERE.

YES, SIR...

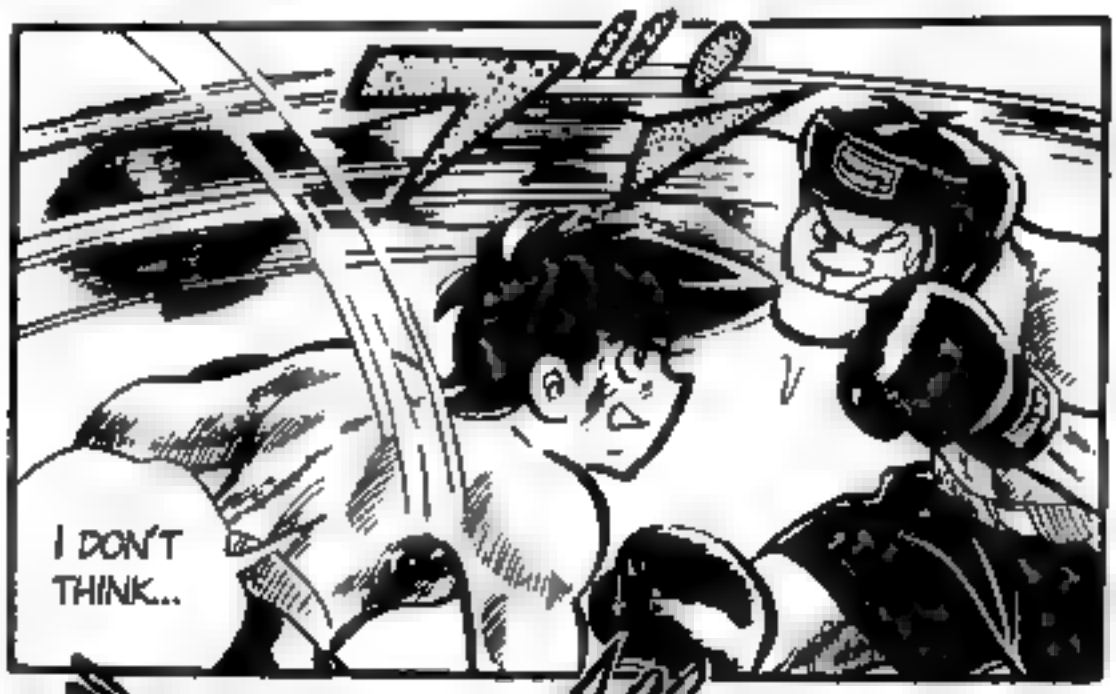
BUT EVEN SO, HE'S STILL JUST ANOTHER SANDBAG WITH GLOVES IN MY EYES.
HMM... SEEMS A LITTLE TOUGHER THAN THE LAST GUY...

HERE I COME!



NOT BAD...

NGH!
WHOA!


I DON'T THINK...

KEEP IT UP!
ALRIGHT, YASUTA!

THAT WAS WORTH CHEERING ABOUT!

COME ON! I SAID I WANTED SOMEONE WHO CAN FIGHT!
ISN'T THERE ANYBODY HERE IN BOKUTOU THAT CAN MAKE ME FEEL TENSE LIKE IN A REAL FIGHT!?

P-PREZ...

KK-KRAK!

PUNCH BACK, YASUTA!

YASUTA!

OH CRAP...

FANTASTIC! LET THEM IN RIGHT AWAY.

QUICKLY!

YES, THEY'RE AT THE ENTRANCE.

THEY'RE HERE?

IT'S UMM...

WHAT!?

LET'S GO IN AND WATCH, TIGER.

GOOD, GOOD...

HE'S BUSY SPARRING RIGHT NOW.

PLEASE COME IN, SIRS.

C'MON, ISHIHARA!

DON'T JUST STAND THERE! ATTAAAACK!

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

CLOSE IN ON HIM AND SHOW WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF!

DRIVE IN!

HA. WITH THOSE DEAD LEGS, YOU'RE ALREADY DONE.

CLOSE IN ON ME?

GO, ISHIHARA!

HAHH!

NGHHH...

THAT ONLY GIVES TEXTBOOK-STYLE PUNCHES...

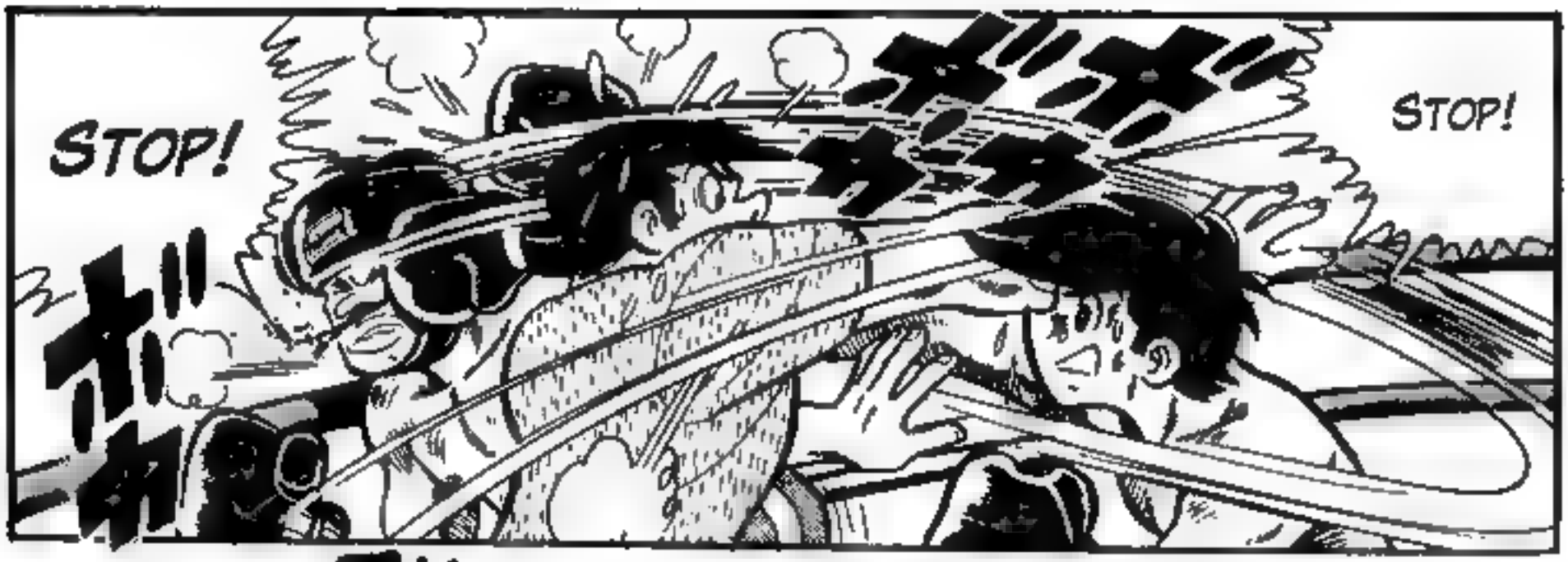
THAT ARE REAL EASY TO READ!

YOU'RE THE TYPE...

S-STOP!

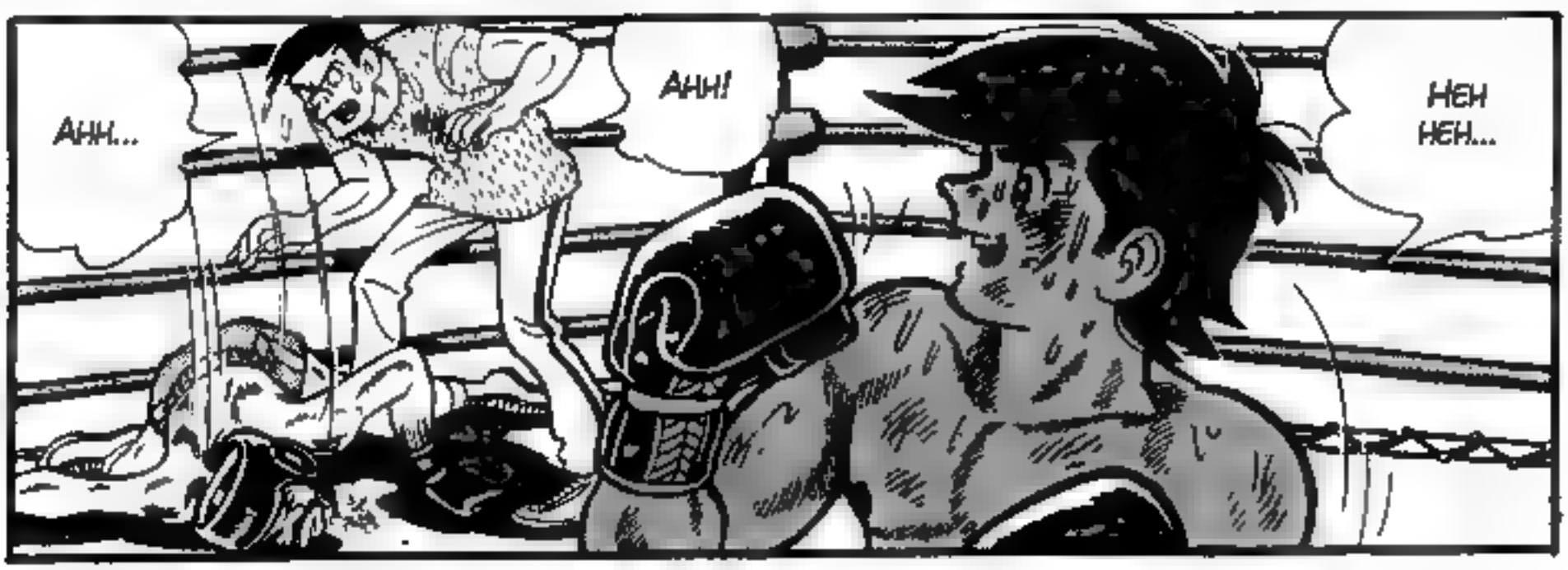
YOU'RE PRACTICALLY BEGGING FOR ME...

TO GIVE YOU A COUNTER!


STOP!
STOP!

ARE YOU DEAF, YOU DUMBASS!?
I SAID STOP!

ズル…!!


AHH...
AHH!
HEH HEH...

THAT WAS PRACTICALLY A STREET FIGHT, NOT A SPAR.

THE HELL WAS THAT, JOE?

PANT

PANT

NO, WAIT! HE PROBABLY HAS A CONCUSSION SO DON'T MOVE HIS HEAD!

TAKE HIM TO THE DOCTOR'S OFFICE NOW!

SHIT, THAT SON OF A...

WE'RE GOING HOME.

THAT'S ENOUGH FOR TODAY.

PFFT. I MIGHT'VE FOUGHT 5 GUYS BUT NONE OF THEM COULD LAST EVEN 2 ROUNDS.

COME ON, TAKE THOSE GLOVES OFF.

HAVEN'T YOU HAD ENOUGH?

THAT WAS YOUR 5TH OPPONENT ALREADY.

DID THIS GYM ALREADY RUN OUT OF DECENT FIGHTERS?

WHAT!?

I HAVE PLENTY OF OTHER YOUNG AND SPIRITED BOXERS HERE YOU CAN FIGHT.

HAHA... DON'T WORRY.

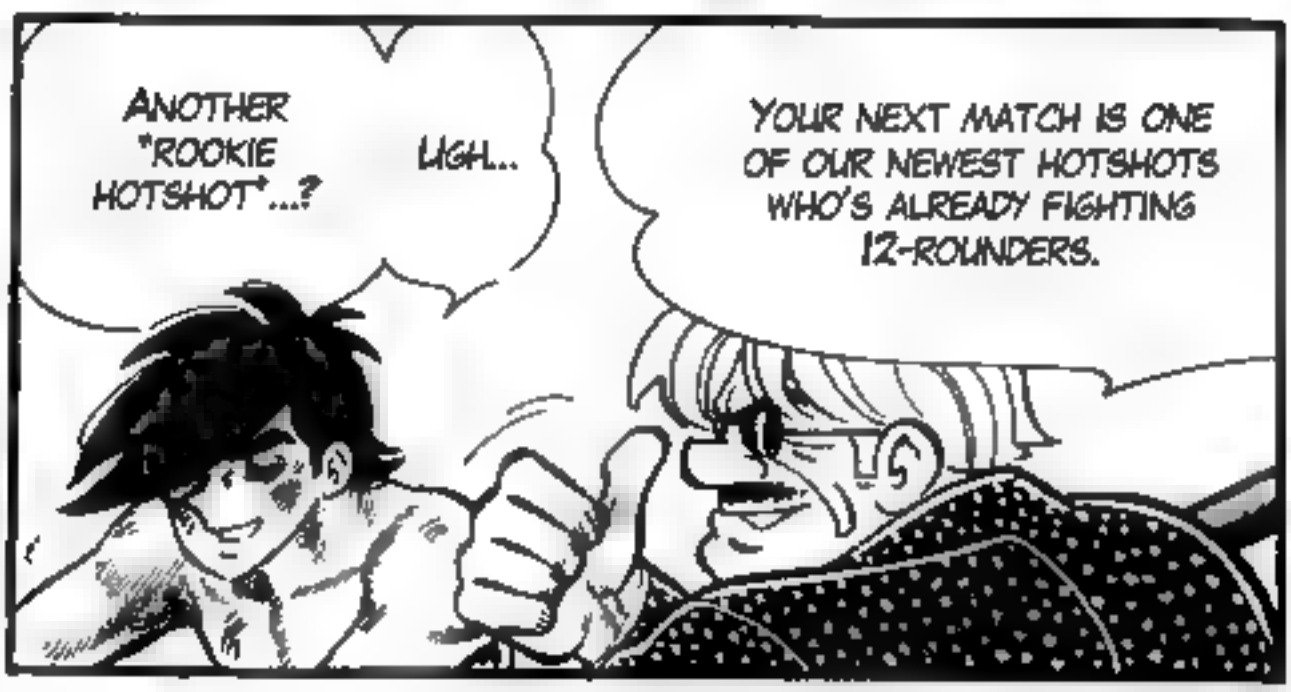
IF I CAN'T EVEN HAVE A DECENT 6-ROUND SPAR, I'D MUCH RATHER BE HITTIN' THE PUNCHING BALL.

I JUST WANT SOMEONE WHO CAN GIVE ME A DECENT CHALLENGE!
I DON'T GIVE A SHIT IF THEY'RE YOUNG OR SPIRITED!
J-JOE...

GO GET CHANGED.
KURASHIMA, YOU'RE NEXT.
YES, SIR...

I UNDERS-TAND.
O-OF COURSE, OF COURSE.

DON'T YOU HAVE ANY RANKED BOXERS HERE?


ANOTHER "ROOKIE HOTSHOT"...?
UGH...
YOUR NEXT MATCH IS ONE OF OUR NEWEST HOTSHOTS WHO'S ALREADY FIGHTING 12-ROUNDERS.

IF EVEN KURASHIMA'S NO GOOD, I'LL PUT YOU UP AGAINST A RANKED BOXER OR WHOEVER YOU WISH!
JUST GIVE HIM A TRY, WON'T YOU?
NGHH...
AS FOR THE REST OF YOU LOT, RETURN TO YOUR PRACTICE NOW.

WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU TODAY, JOE...
WHY'RE YOU SO QUICK-TEMPERED, MORE SO THAN YOUR USUAL SELF?

2ND FLOOR?
. . . .
I'M JUST A LITTLE TICKED OFF AT THE LITTLE STAGE THEY'VE SET UP ON THE 2ND FLOOR.
I'M NOT BITCHING...
IT AIN'T CLASSY TO COME TO ANOTHER GYM JUST TO BITCH AT EVERYONE, YOU KNOW.

WHISPER
WHISPER

T-TIGER...!
AND THE OWNERS OF ALL THE OTHER GYMS...!

THE LENGTHS THEY'RE GOING THROUGH JUST FOR THIS IS...
I AIN'T THE TYPE TO PANIC JUST BECAUSE OF THAT BUT...
THEIR CHEAP, UNDERHANDED TACTICS ARE REALLY PISSING ME OFF...

THEY WANT TO DISSECT MY FIGHTING STYLE IN RETURN FOR SOME SPARRING PARTNERS.
THERE'S NO THING AS A FREE LUNCH IN THIS WORLD.
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID.
....

STOP WASTIN' MY TIME!

YOU READY YET OR WHAT!?

. . . .

. . . .

. . . .

WE SHOULD LEAVE RIGHT NOW!

JOE, LET'S GO!

THEY'RE REALLY STARTING TO GET ANGRY...

CRAP...

THAT BASTARD...

I AIN'T DONE HERE YET!

IF YOU WANNA GO, THEN GO BY YOURSELF!

NGHH...

JUST RING THE BELL ALREADY!

YOUR GLOVES AND GEAR ON NICE AND TIGHT, SLOWPOKE?

USE YOUR FOOTWORK AND -

HE SHOULD BE RUNNIN' OUT OF ENERGY BY NOW.

GET'IM KURASHIMA!

DAMN HIM!

AGHHH!

IF YOU'VE GOT TIME FOR FOOTWORK, THEN COME AT ME ALREADY!

AGHH!

AHHH!

AGHHH!

I DON'T EVEN NEED TO USE MY FISTS ON TRASH LIKE YOU!

...

USING MY FEET IS MORE THAN ENOUGH!

OOF...

UGHH!

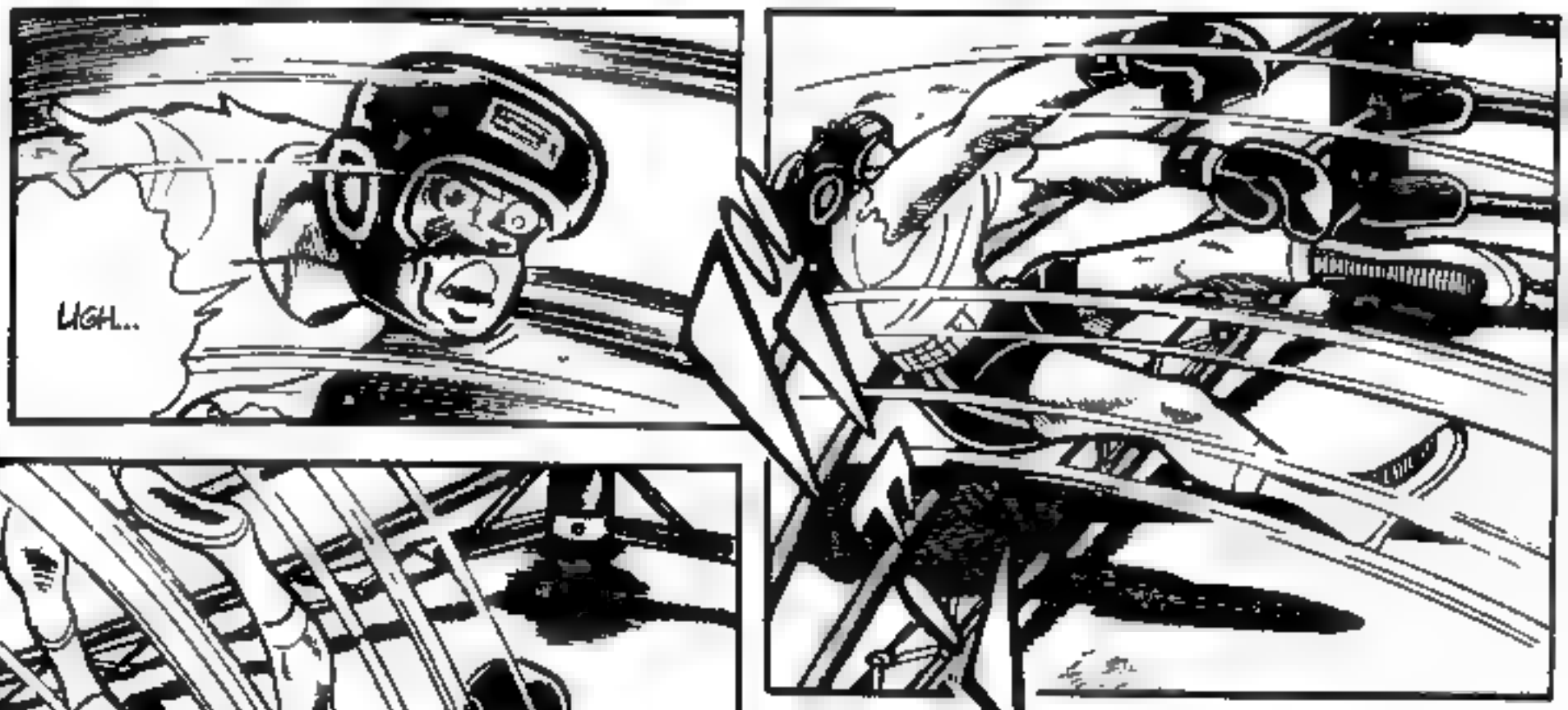
STOP!

NO, JOE!

KILL HIM!

THIS AIN'T KICKBOXING!

THE HELL DOES HE THINK HE'S DOING!?


UGH...

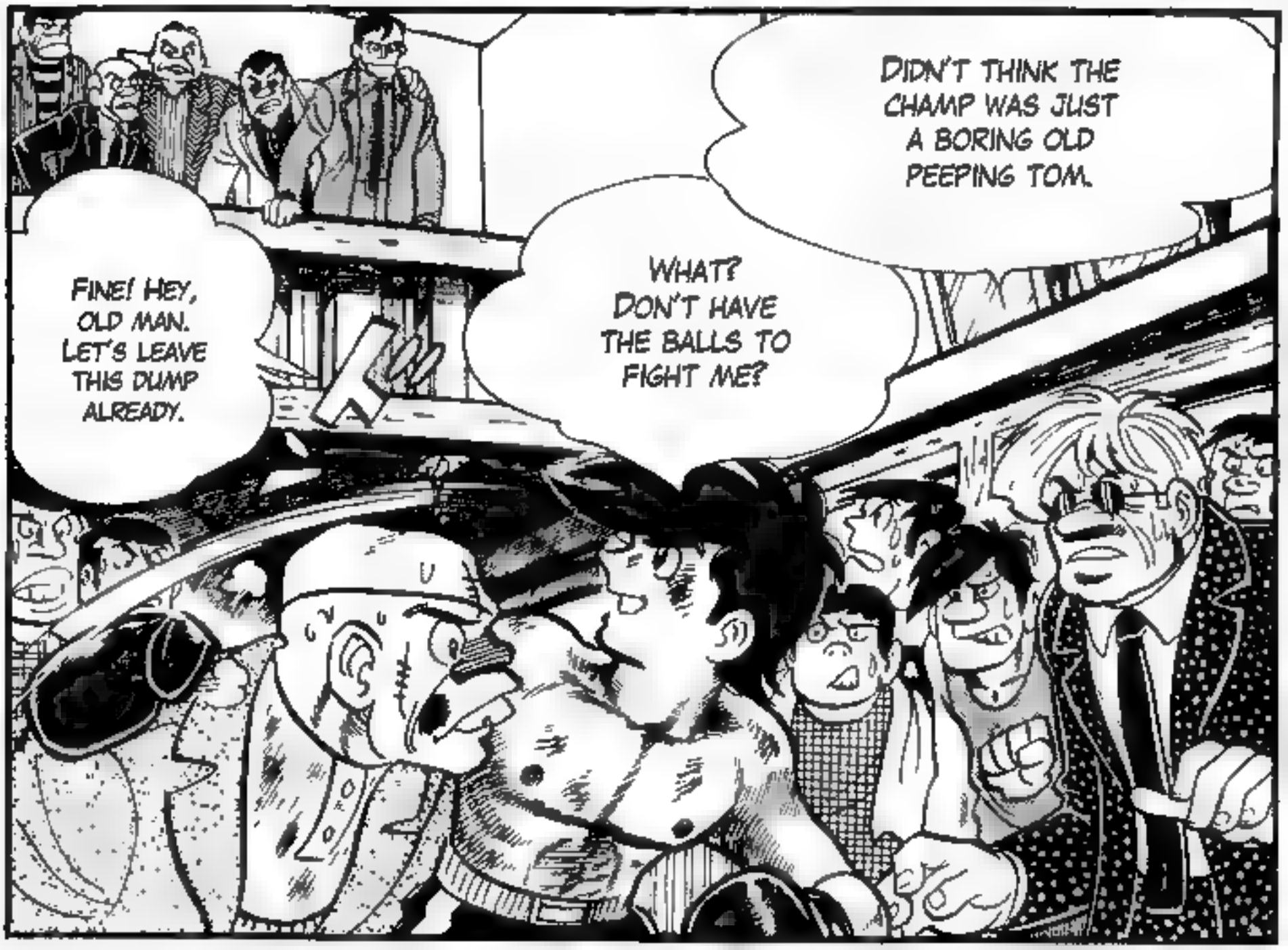
K.O!

SO THEN GIVE ME THE CHAMP SITTING OVER THERE!

NEXT!
YOU PROMISED YOU'D LET ME FIGHT WHOEVER I WANT FOR MY NEXT SPAR, RIGHT!?

CARE FOR A LIL' SPAR WITH ME BEFORE OUR BIG DATE?
YO, TIGER!
IT'D PROBABLY BE A WHOLE LOT BETTER THAN SPYING ON ME WITH YOUR CAMERAS AND MEMO PADS!

CALM DOWN!
N-NO, TIGER!
HEH...


FINE! HEY, OLD MAN. LET'S LEAVE THIS DUMP ALREADY.
WHAT? DON'T HAVE THE BALLS TO FIGHT ME?
DIDN'T THINK THE CHAMP WAS JUST A BORING OLD PEEPING TOM.

AHH-

I'D RATHER USE THE JUMPING ROPES BACK AT OUR GYM THAN HAVE TO FIGHT MORE OF THESE USELESS SACKS OF CRAP.

....

L-LET'S JUST ALL CALM DOWN...

WHAT?

FOR BEING USELESS SACKS OF CRAP...

SOOOORRY, YOUR HIGHNESS,

PLEASE S-

WAIT!

NO WAIT!

I'LL APOLOGIZE ON JOE'S BEHALF!

ドドドドドー

ドカ

IDIOT...

エイ

OH, SO YOU FAGGOTS FINALLY WANT A PIECE OF ME!?

I'LL BE HAPPY TO TAKE ALL OF YOU ON!

MIGHT AS WELL FINALLY GET A DECENT WORKOUT!

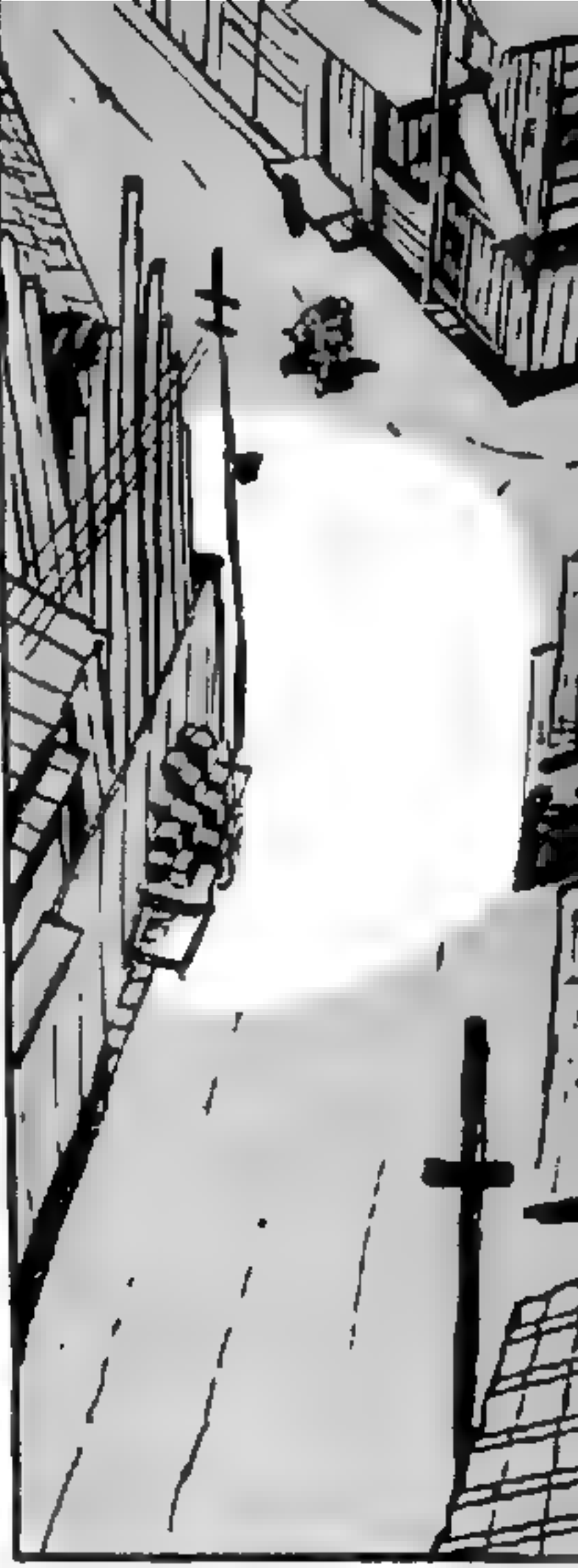
I'LL KILL YOU!

TAKE THIS!

I'LL SHUT THAT BIG MOUTH OF YOURS FOR GOOD!

I PINNED HIM DOWN!

ガラガラ



YOU... YOU ALRIGHT...?

HAHA... IT WAS WORTH GOING TO BOKUTOU...

BUT I WON'T LOSE.

I SEE HOW IT IS NOW.

THEY WANT TO DESTROY YOUR GYM AND ME FOR GOOD.

NOW I SEE WHAT THEY'RE PLANNING...

AND THE FIRST ONE...

I'LL HAVE THEM LYING FACE DOWN BEFORE MY FEET SOON ENOUGH...!

AND ONE BY ONE,

I'LL THINK OF THEM ALL AS MY PERSONAL ENEMIES FROM NOW.

KORAKU

TODAY'S MATCH!

Tiger Ozaki

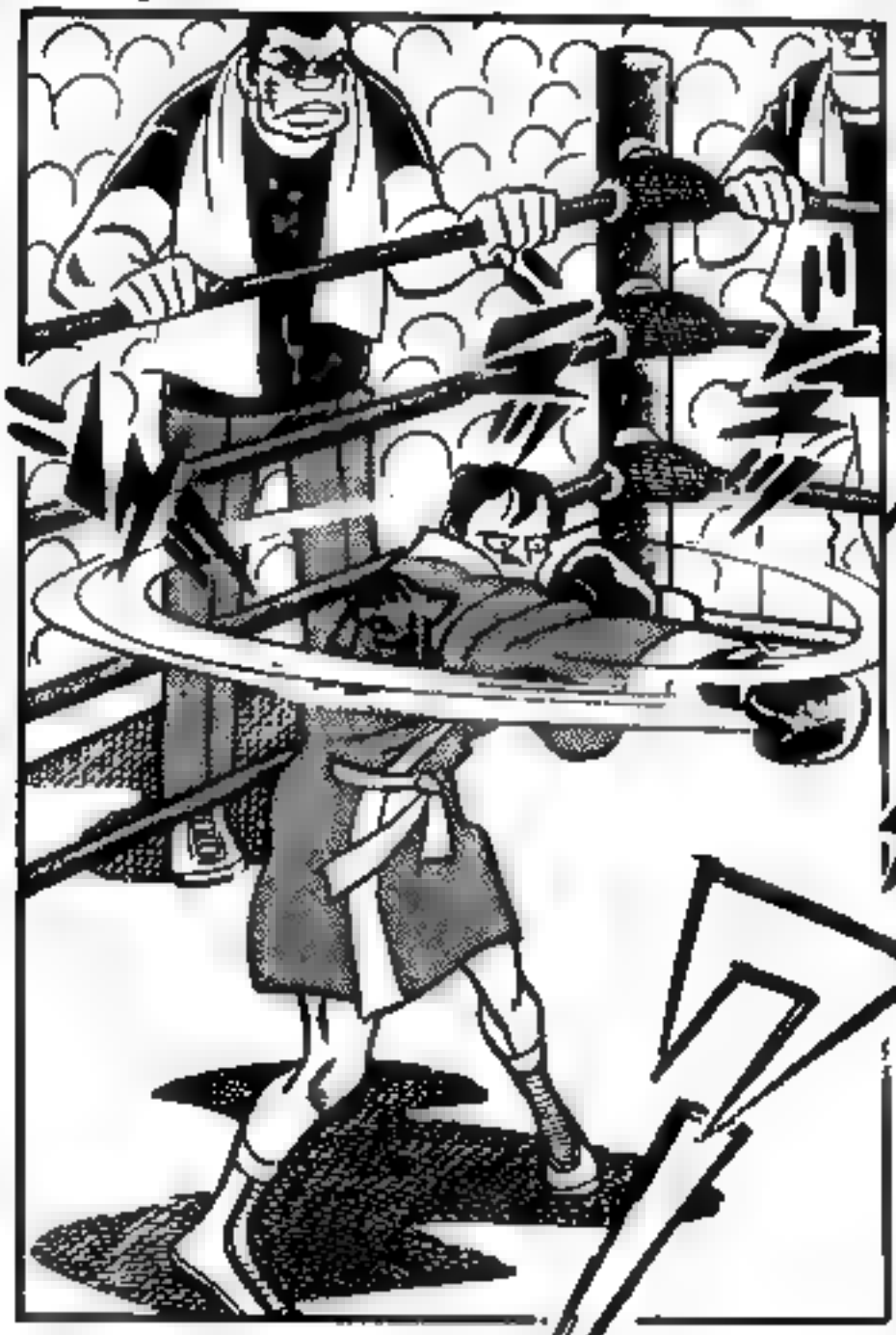
VS

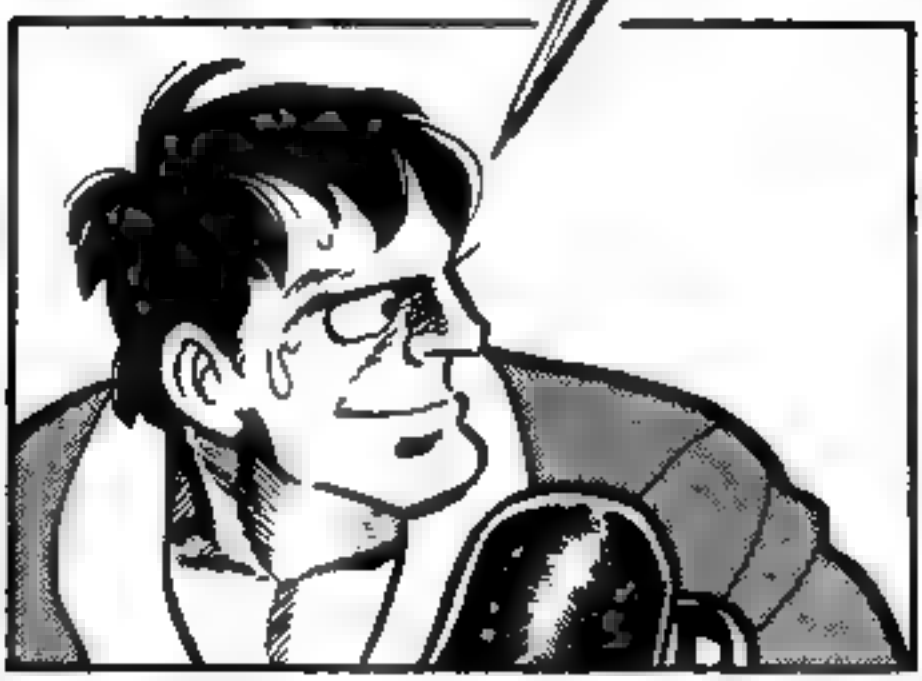
Yabuki Joe

WILL BE THAT TIGER OZAKI!

JUST YOU WAIT UNTIL OUR MATCH...

I SWEAR I WON'T LOSE!

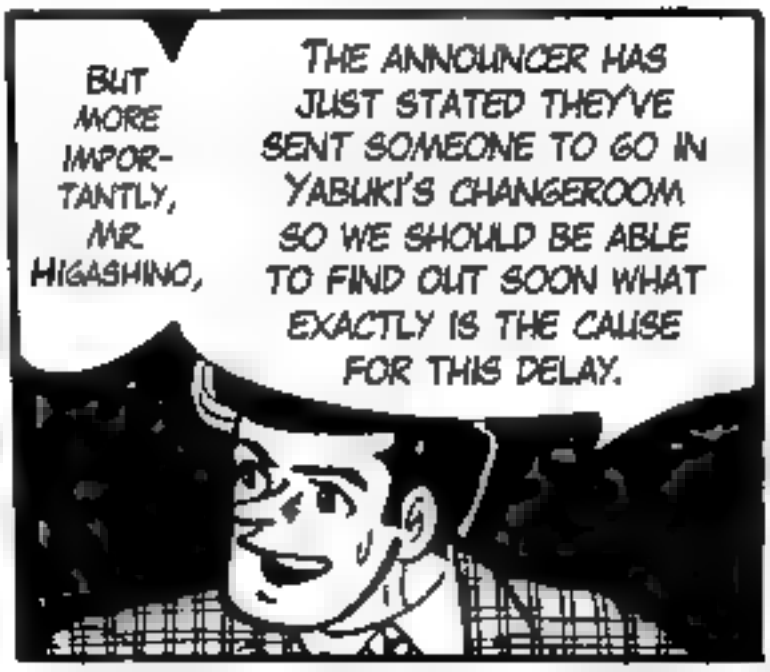




THE BANTAMWEIGHT CHAMPION TIGER OZAKI HAS BEEN STANDING ON THE RING FOR A WHILE NOW BUT NEITHER YABUKI NOR HIS SECONDS HAVE YET TO SHOW UP. QUITE A PREDICAMENT WE HAVE HERE TODAY, FOLKS.
YES, IT'S ALREADY PAST THE SCHEDULED STARTING TIME...

COME OUT ALREADY!
YABUKI!!!!!!! WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU!?
DON'T YOU KNOW IT'S RUDE TO KEEP THE CHAMP WAITING!?

WELL...
IN CALLING THIS MATCHUP BETWEEN TIGER AND YABUKI A THOUGHTLESS AND RECKLESS MOVE BY THE BOXING ASSOCIATION?
DO YOU AGREE WITH THE PAPERS,


BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, MR. HIGASHINO,
THE ANNOUNCER HAS JUST STATED THEY'VE SENT SOMEONE TO GO IN YABUKI'S CHANGEROOM SO WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND OUT SOON WHAT EXACTLY IS THE CAUSE FOR THIS DELAY.

NOT ONLY THAT, JOE'S HELLISH BODY BLOWS HAVE EARNED HIM THE NICKNAME, "MESSENGER FROM HELL," BY OTHER BANTAMWEIGHTS WHO'RE NOW AFRAID OF EVEN FIGHTING HIM.

HAVING MADE TONOYA KOUSUKE HIS FIRST VICTIM, HIS HOT STREAK HAS CONTINUED WITH 5-STRAIGHT KO WINS.

EVER SINCE COMING OUT FROM THAT HIATUS AFTER HIS MATCH WITH RIKIISHI, YABUKI HAS BEEN QUITE PHENOMENAL ON THE RING.

SO ALTHOUGH IT SEEMS LIKE A MISMATCH WHEN LOOKING SOLELY AT THEIR RANKINGS, IN TERMS OF PURE SKILL, I DO NOT BELIEVE IT'LL BE SO ONE-SIDED.

DUE TO THE INJURIES HE RECEIVED FROM RECENTLY FIGHTING WITH MEMBERS OF BOKUTOU GYM OFF THE RING,

I'VE JUST BEEN INFORMED OF THE REASON FOR THE DELAY.

WELL SAID...

THE BOXING COMMISSION PHYSICIAN WAS DOING A CHECK-UP TO ENSURE IT WOULD BE SAFE FOR HIM TO FIGHT.

YOU'RE UP AGAINST THE CHAMPION, YOU KNOW!

YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN FIGHT WHEN YOU'RE ALREADY BANGED UP THAT MUCH!?

HEY, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FACE?

AHAHAHA! THAT'S SO YABUKI!

I HEARD HE GOT HIS ASS BEATEN FOR MAKING FUN OF THE BOKUTOU GYM BOXERS.

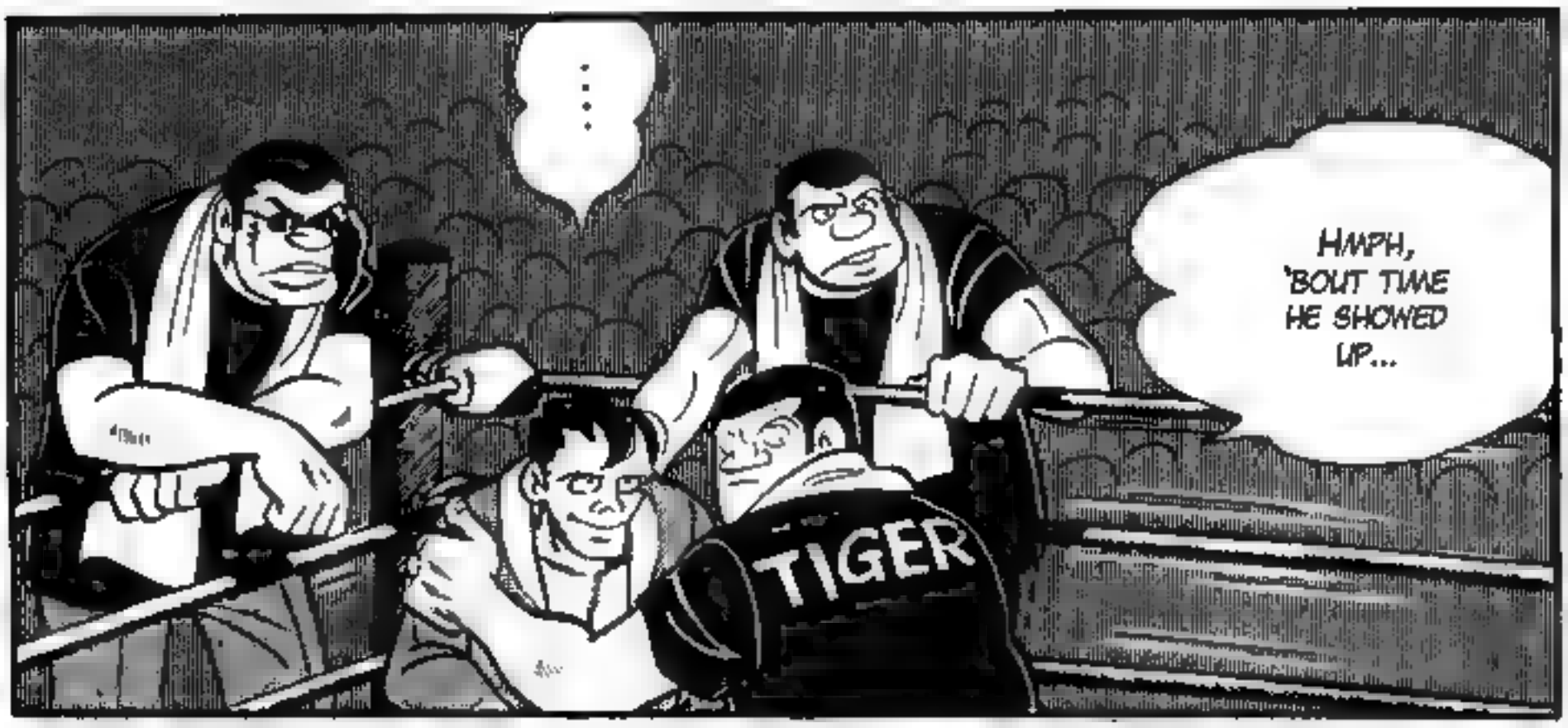
YOU CAN DO IT, JOE!

I BELIEVE IN YOU!

HE SHOWED UP LOOKING QUITE HEAVILY WOUNDED FOR THAT FIGHT AS WELL.

THIS REMINDS OF THE YABUKI'S MATCH AGAINST WOLF...

YES BUT THAT TIME, IT WAS FROM HIS SPECIAL TRAINING TO COUNTER WOLF...


...
HMPH, 'BOUT TIME HE SHOWED UP...
TIGER

WE'RE ALREADY RUNNING LATE SO SAVE THE USUAL SPEECH!
JUST GET THE MATCH STARTED, REF!
TO THE CENTER, PLAYERS!
START THE FIGHT ALREADY, YOU SLOWPOKES!

TANGE...

TIGER

JUST GIVING YOU A LITTLE WARNING BEFOREHAND.

WHA?

W...

TO THROW THE TOWEL, I MEAN.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE.

IF YOU'VE GOT TIME TO WORRY ABOUT OTHERS, I SUGGEST YOU TELL THAT SNAKE-FACED BOXER OF YOURS TO STOP LOOKING SO NERVOUS.

YOU THINK THESE SCRATCHES WILL STOP JOE!?

DON'T YOU LOOK DOWN ON US!

WEAK POINT...?

AH..!

I'M DOING IT BECAUSE WE'VE CLEARLY SEEN THROUGH YOUR BOXER'S WEAK POINT DURING HIS SPARS AT BOKUTOU GYM.

I'M NOT GIVING YOU THIS WARNING BECAUSE OF YOUR PLAYER'S INJURIES.

THERE'S NOT A CHANCE IN HELL FOR YABUKI TO WIN!

THIS MATCH IS ALREADY IN TIGER'S HANDS.

LET ME JUST MAKE THIS CLEAR.

HIS WEAK POINT...?

STOP!

WHY YOU....!

...

I SAID RETURN TO YOUR CORNER!

SO HURRY UP AND RETURN TO YOUR CORNERS! THAT GOES FOR ALL OF YOU!

THE BELL WILL RING SOON,

I WANT ALL SECONDS OFF THE RING!

DAMN IT...

CALM DOWN, JOE!

JOE'S WEAK POINT...

JOE'S...

I'LL MAKE HIM EAT THOSE WORDS...!

THAT BASTARD...

N-NO, BUT...

YOU SAYIN' I'VE GOT A WEAK POINT!?

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE WORRIED?

YOU LOOK PRETTY SHAKEN UP.

WHAT'S THE MATTER?

I SWORE I'D TAKE DOWN ALL OF THEM, STARTING WITH TIGER!

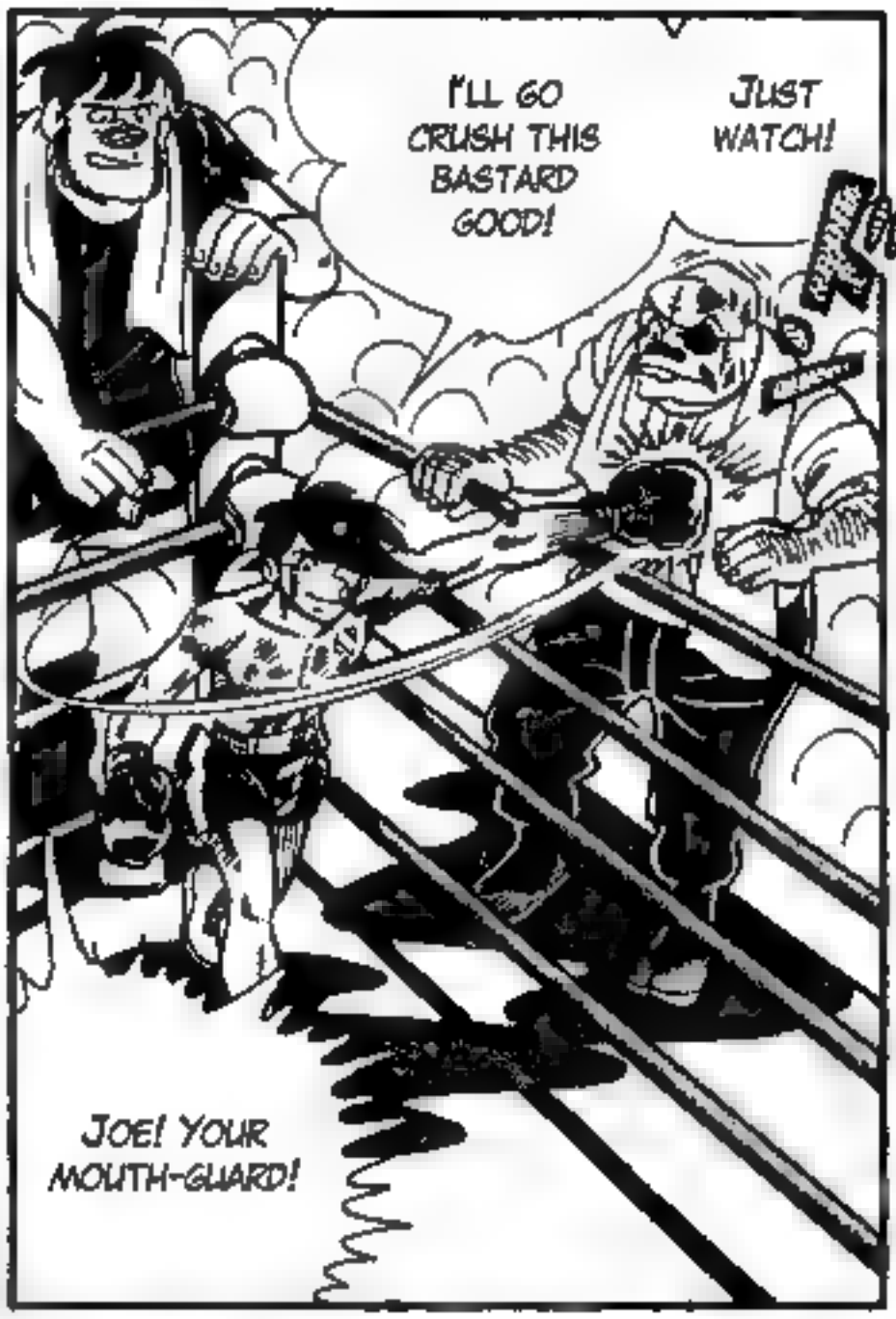
REMEMBER WHAT I SWORE TO YOU ON THAT NIGHT?

THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL I'LL LOSE!

SO YOU'D GET SUCKED INTO TIGER'S PACE...

I'M SURE HE WAS JUST SAYING THAT TO PSYCH YOU OUT,

PFT! AS IF SOMETHING THAT STUPID COULD WORK ON ME!


I'LL GO CRUSH THIS BASTARD GOOD!
JUST WATCH!
JOE! YOUR MOUTH-GUARD!

C'MON, YABUKI!
TIGER!
JOOOEE!
TIIIGEEERR!

HEH

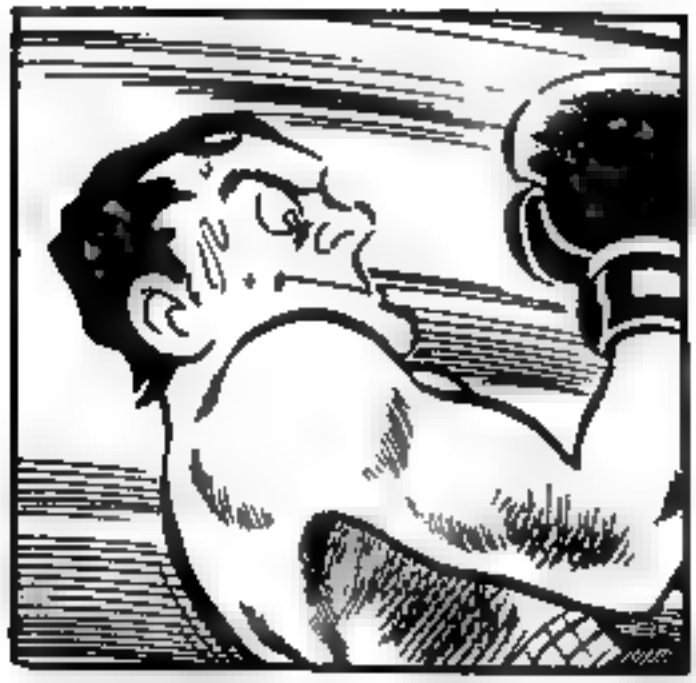
HAHHH!

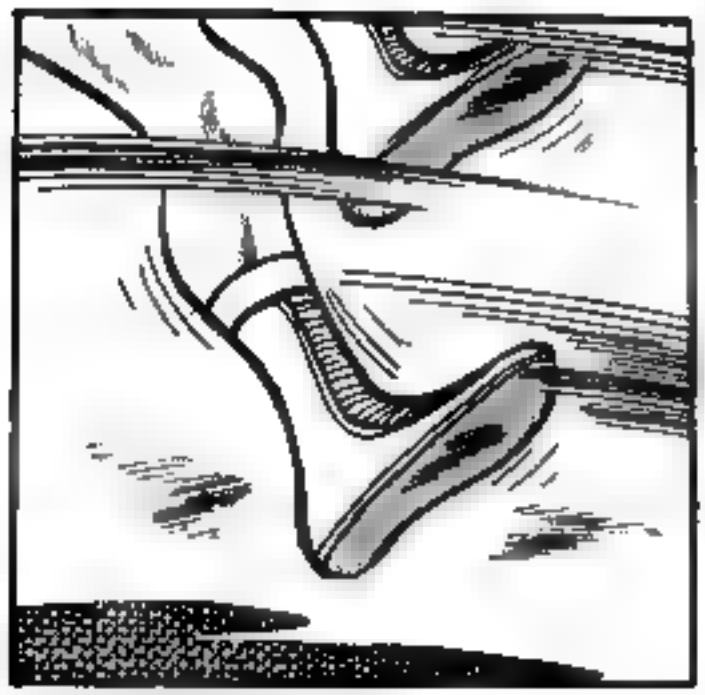
AHHH! YABUKI LAUNCHES INTO AN IMPRESSIVE FLURRY OF BLOWS AS SOON AS THE BELL RINGS!

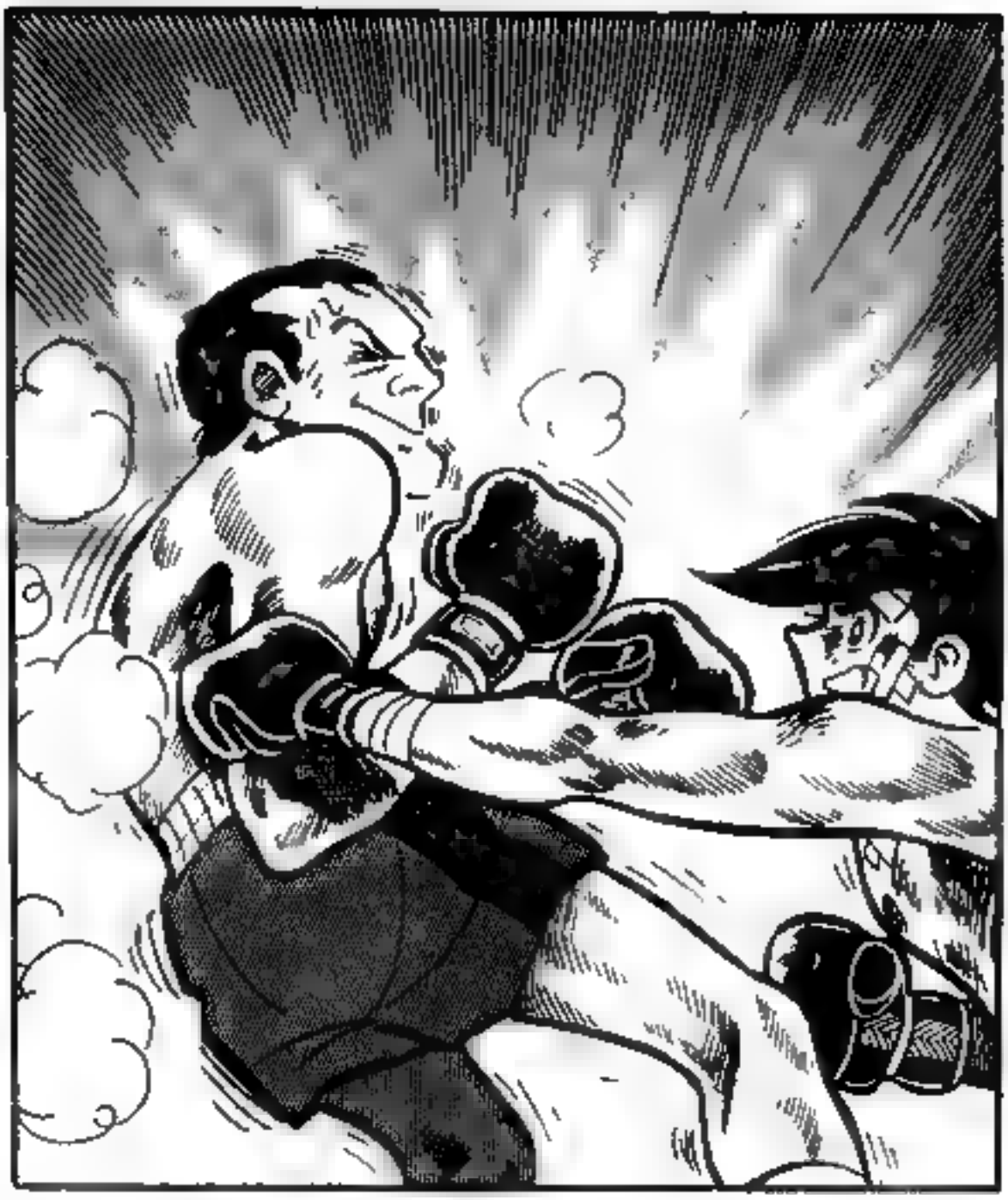
LIKE A LOOSE CANNON, HE'S PUSHING TIGER OZAKI TO THE ROPES!

COOLLY DODGING THE PUNCHES BY CROUCHING AND WITH EXCELLENT FOOTWORK!

HOWEVER, TIGER SHOWS CONVINCING PROOF OF HIS STATUS AS CHAMPION,







WITH A PUNCH THAT STRONG, I'M SURE HE TOOK SOME DAMAGE REGARDLESS OF HIS BLOCK.

THOUGH HE MANAGED TO BLOCK IT JUST IN TIME WITH HIS ELBOW, HE'S BEEN PUSHED ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE ROPES FROM THE IMPACT!

AHHH! A LIVER BLOW!

I DON'T CARE IF YOU'RE THE CHAMP OR NOT...

HMPH.

SHOW HIM WHO'S BOSS!

ATTA BOY!

KEEP ON CHARGIN'!

BUT RIKIISHI WAS FAR SUPERIOR TO YOU IN EVERY WAY!

TURN AROUND, TIGER!

T-TURN AROUND!

HEH. LISTEN TO YOUR COACH!

GET AWAY FROM THE ROPES IF YOU CAN, THAT IS!

AH-

IT'S NOW YABUKI WHO FINDS HIS BACK TO THE ROPES...!

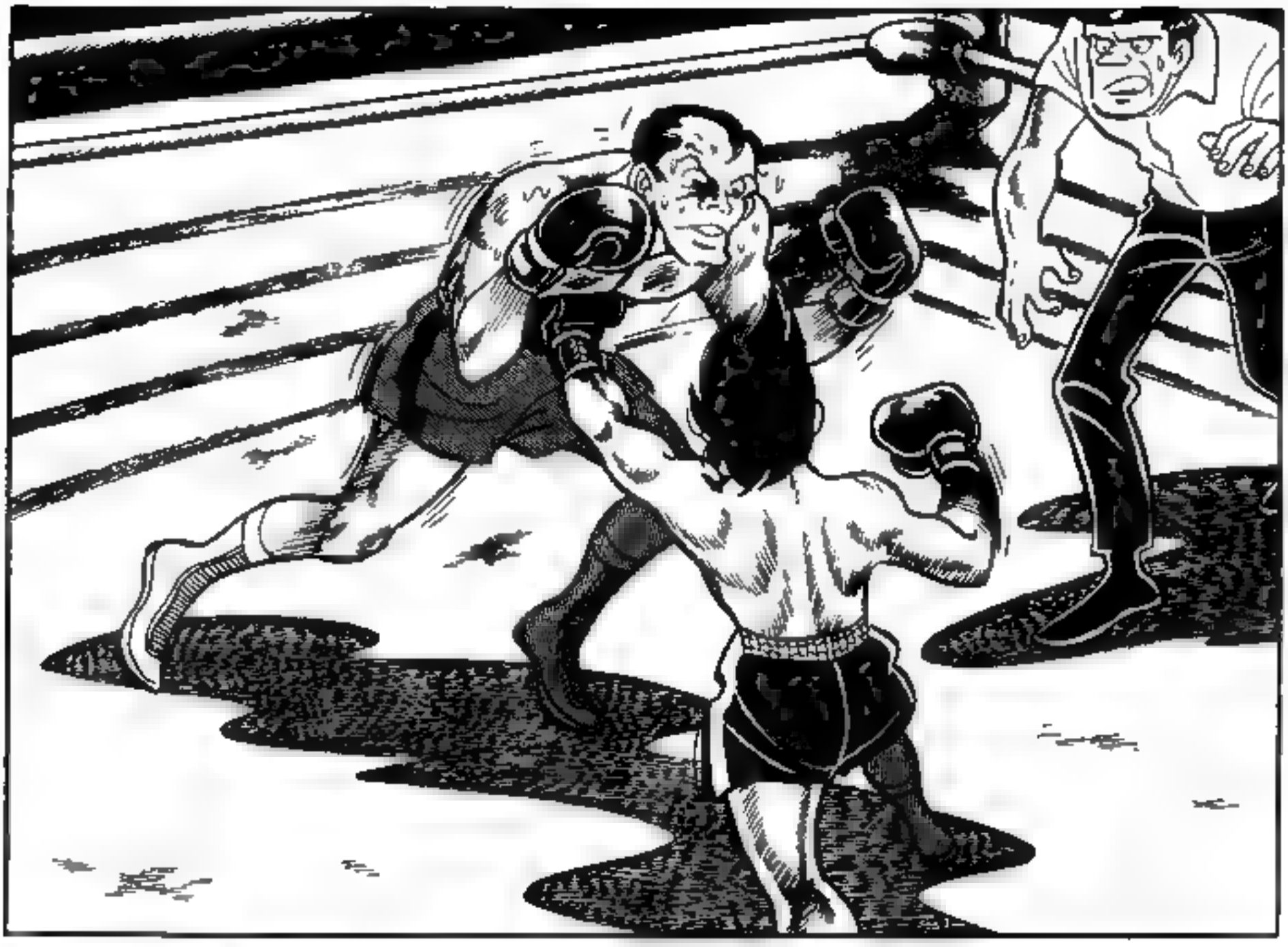
LIKE PRESSING A SWITCH, TIGER HAS TURNED THE SITUATION COMPLETELY AROUND!

AHHH...

J-JOE...

AHH!

ไม่ใช่...



UGH...

HEH HEH...

TIGEEEERRRRR!

N- NO...

ガシィ

YABUKI'S INFAMOUS STOMACH BLOW FINISHER!

AHHH!

IT LANDED FLAWLESSLY!

AHHH!

I REPEAT, TIGER HAS GONE DOWN!

T-TIGER OZAKI IS DOWN!

WOOHOO!

THAT'S ONE HELL OF A FINISHER!

KO!!

HAHA. I KNOW, I KNOW.

GAHHH!

B-BACK TO YOUR CORNER!

QUITE A SHOCK FOR ALL THOSE WHO PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED YABUKI RELIED TOO MUCH ON BRAWNS AND NOT ENOUGH ON BRAINS!

YES...

AND LANDED A PERFECT BODY BLOW...!

TRULY SPECTACULAR... YABUKI BAITED TIGER PERFECTLY WITH THAT FEINT UPSTAIRS,

K.O.

HE... HE DID IT!

THAT PUNCH JUST NOW...

THAT...

.....?

HE DID IT, OLD MAN!

STAND UP, YOU IDIOT!

STAND UP, TIGER!

2!

3!

4!

UGH...

5!

6!

NGH...

OH, I WONDER ABOUT THAT...

HEH HEH.

I JUST... COULDN'T HELP IT...

YEAH...

WELL IN ANY CASE, YOU NOW SAW FOR YOURSELF THAT OUR STRATEGY IS FLAWLESS!

YOU RETARD!

9!

DON'T YOU DARE MAKE SUCH A STUPID MISTAKE A SECOND TIME!

BUT HIS WEAK POINT IS NOW CLEAR AND PRESENT TO ME.

MY REFLEXES MADE ME COVER MY FACE BEFORE I REALIZED IT...

IF IT'S CLEAR, THEN HURRY UP AND GET BACK IN THE GAME!

7!
8!

FIGHT ON!

LET ME WIPE YOUR GLOVES FIRST.

GOT IT...

HMPH, SO HE MANAGED TO GET BACK UP...

NO NEED TO HOLD BACK, YABUKI! KNOCK HIM OUT ALREADY!

YOUR OPPONENT'S STILL RECOVERING SO TAKE YOUR TIME AND FIND HIS OPENINGS!

AS TIGER GETS BACK UP AND RESUMES THE FIGHT...

THE COUNT STOPS AT 9,

WELL, WHATEVER. IT'D BE NO FUN FOR ME TOO IF I FINISHED HIM OFF WITH JUST ONE BLOW.

BLOOD

I'LL MAKE SURE,

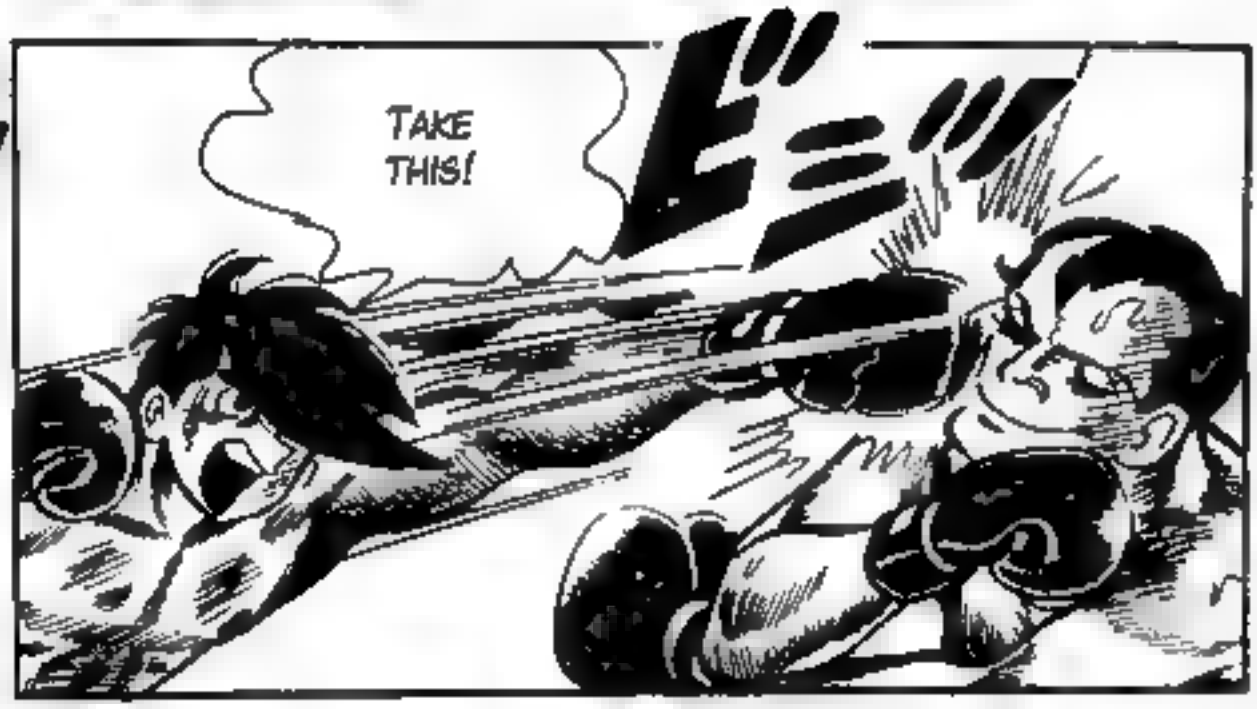
NO NEED TO TELL ME!

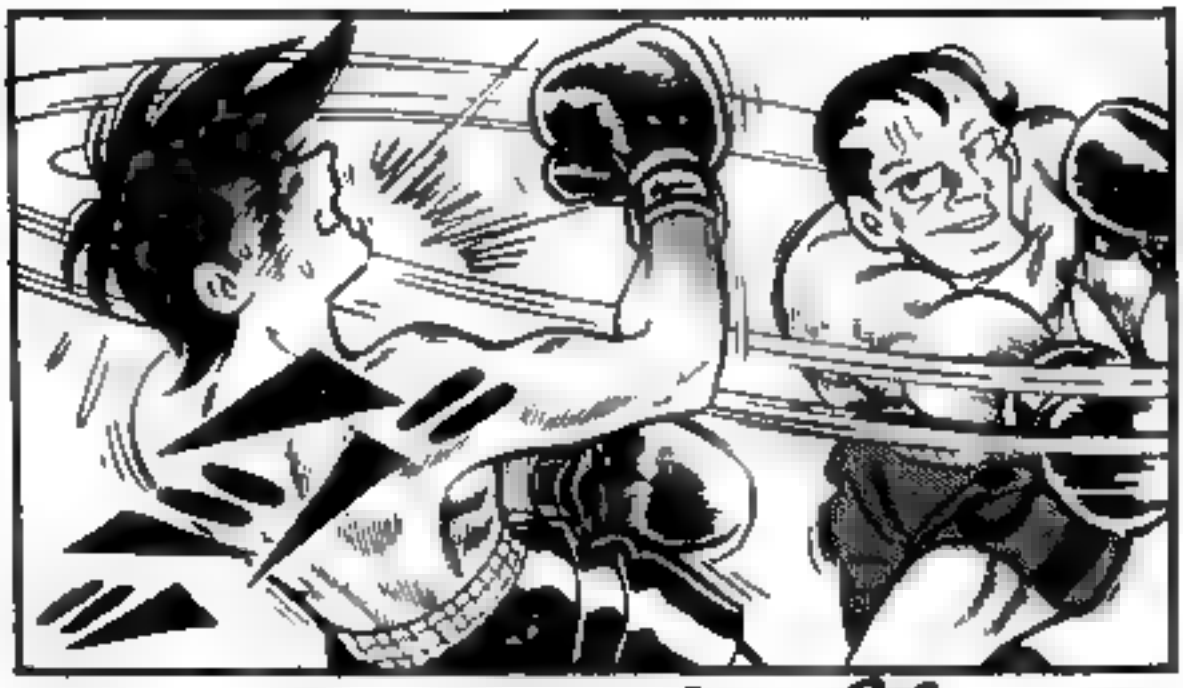
TO FINISH HIM OFF FOR GOOD THIS TIME!

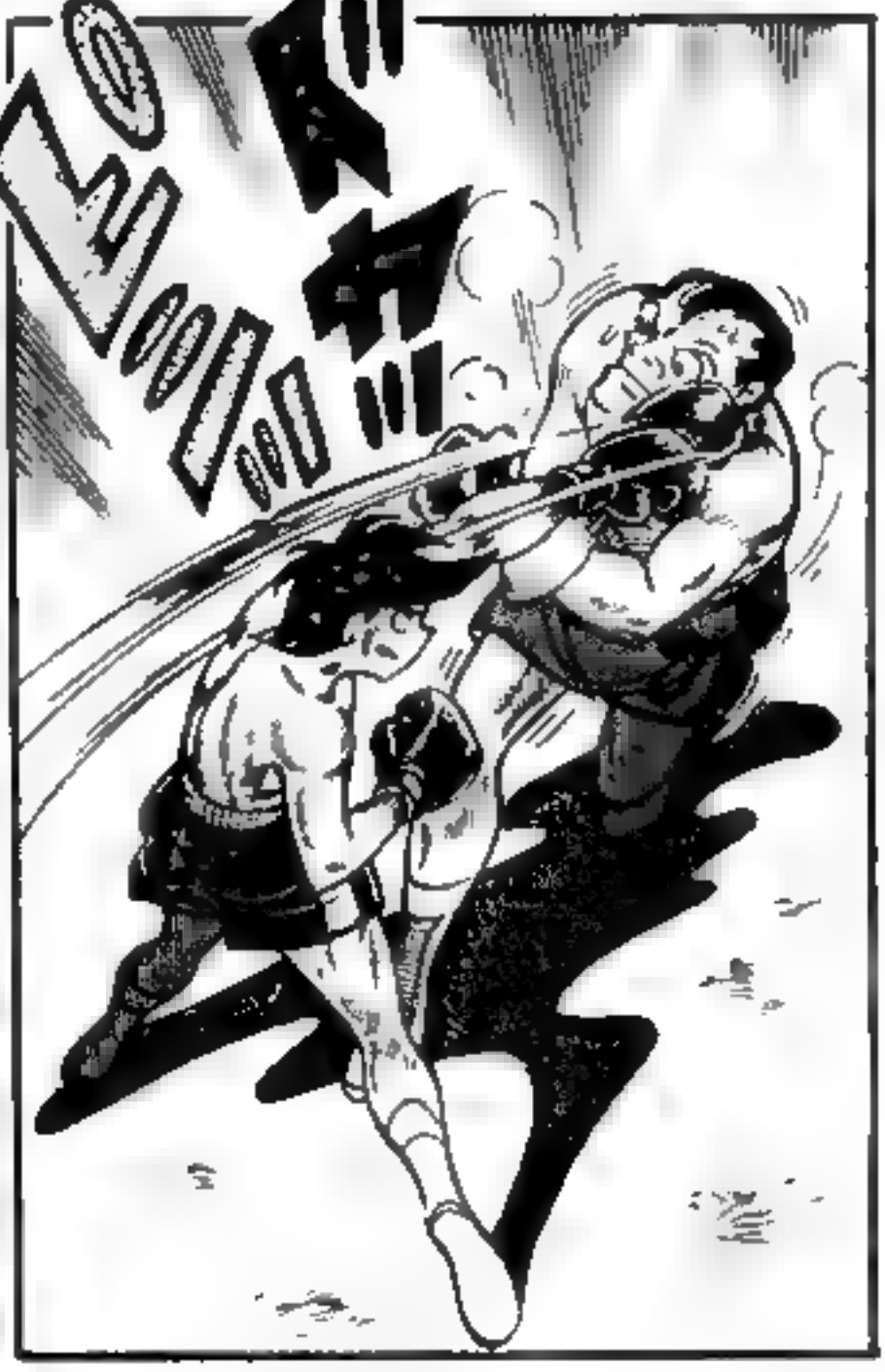
HMM...
TIGER'S BEING PUSHED BACK!
ANOTHER BODY BLOW ATTEMPT BY YABUKI!

BUT HE'S COVERING UP HIS LOWER BODY PRETTY TIGHT...
IT'S GOOD THAT I'M PUSHING HIM BACK...

KK


TAKE THIS!
ビ




ZOOO

YES, QUITE A POOR SHOWING, IF YOU ASK ME...

FOR SOME REASON, JOE'S ATTACKS SEEMS TO BE RATHER LACKLUSTER...

AH...

HUFF

HUFF

JOE...

SMILING...?

HE'S...

HUH...?

YES, WITH A GUARD THAT TOUGH, I FEAR NOTHING WILL GET IN.

HIS SPECIALTY, THE BODY BLOWS, ARE ALL BEING BLOCKED.

STOOOP!

YOU BASTARD!

YOU JUST LET THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR A KO SLIP THROUGH YOUR FINGERS!

HEH HEH.

THAT'S THE END OF THE FIRST ROUND! RETURN TO YOUR CORNER!

WHAT THE... I CAN'T BELIEVE I COULDN'T FINISH HIM OFF. THE HELL'S WRONG WITH ME?

HUFF

HUFF

OH GODDAMN IT, YABUKI!

SIT DOWN!

JUST WHEN I THOUGHT YOU HAD THIS FIGHT IN THE BAG...

THAT WAS CLOSE, JOE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE I CAME UP SHORT THERE. LOOKS LIKE I SCREWED UP PRETTY BAD.

YEAH.

YOU'VE BEEN CURSED...

YOU DIDN'T SCREW UP.

IT'S ALL OVER NOW...

YOU STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN OVER HIS GHOST.

CURSED...?

NEVER MIND.

IT'S...

THE HELL ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?

ALL OVER?

GHOST?

I GUESS I HAVE NO CHOICE.

IF YOU FEEL THAT STRONGLY ABOUT IT,

SIGH...

ARE YOU FREAKIN' OUTTA YOUR MIND!? WHAT KIND OF SECOND SAYS ALL THAT CRYPTIC BULLSHIT TO A BOXER TRYING TO REGAIN FOCUS!?

OUT WITH IT ALREADY!

STOP YELLING.

JOE, WHEN I SAY CURSED...

I... I DIDN'T WANT TO TELL YOU THIS BECAUSE I WAS WORRIED YOU MIGHT LOSE YOUR CONFIDENCE BUT...

RIKIISHI ...?

R...

YOU STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN OVER RIKIISHI'S DEATH.

I'M TALKING ABOUT RIKIISHI'S GHOST...

THE HELL ARE YOU GIVING ME ALL THIS VOODOO NONSENSE FOR?

'CAUSE IF IT IS, IT'S NOT FUNNY.

IS THIS A JOKE?

OLD MAN! WHAT'RE YOU TELLING HIM ALL THIS FOR IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MATCH!?

...

THAT'S WHAT I MEAN BY HIS CURSE.

SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING, YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS IS STILL TRAUMATIZED.

IT'S NOT NONSENSE.

THE COMMENTATORS AND THE FANS MIGHT'VE THOUGHT IT WAS AN EXCELLENT FEINT, BUT THEY COULDN'T BE MORE WRONG.

THE VERY PROOF OF THIS WAS THAT ATTACK TO HIS HEAD JUST NOW.

YOU SUBCONSCIOUSLY STOPPED AND PULLED YOUR FIST BACK, MAKING IT LOOK LIKE A FAINT.

BACK THEN, WHEN YOUR RIGHT WAS ABOUT TO CONNECT WITH HIS FACE,

SEE, YOU DON'T EVEN REALIZE IT YOURSELF.

I PULLED A FEINT IN THAT ROUND...?

A FEINT...?

YOU'VE SUBCONSCIOUSLY DEVELOPED A FEAR OF ATTACKING UP HIGH!

IN SHORT, BECAUSE YOU ACCIDENTALLY KILLED RIKIISHI FROM THAT PUNCH TO HIS TEMPLE,

AND I'M SORRY TO SAY THERE AIN'T NO FIGHTING AGAINST YOUR OWN INSTINCTS...

WHENEVER YOU TRY TO DELIVER A STRONG-ENOUGH PUNCH TO YOUR OPPONENT'S HEAD, YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS TAKES OVER TO STOP IT AND SWITCH TO A BODY BLOW INSTEAD...

ALTHOUGH IT'S NORMALLY DORMANT....

I'VE BEEN SUBCONSCIOUSLY ONLY TARGETING THE BODY...!

LIKE THAT TIME WITH GONDOU, OR ALL THE OTHER BOXERS I FACED...

ALL MY FINISHERS RECENTLY HAVE BEEN BODY BLOWS...

AHH... N-NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...

BY OBSERVING YOU SPAR...

YES, AND THOSE GUYS OVER THERE FOUND OUT ABOUT THAT HABIT OF YOURS THAT EVEN YOU WEREN'T AWARE OF,

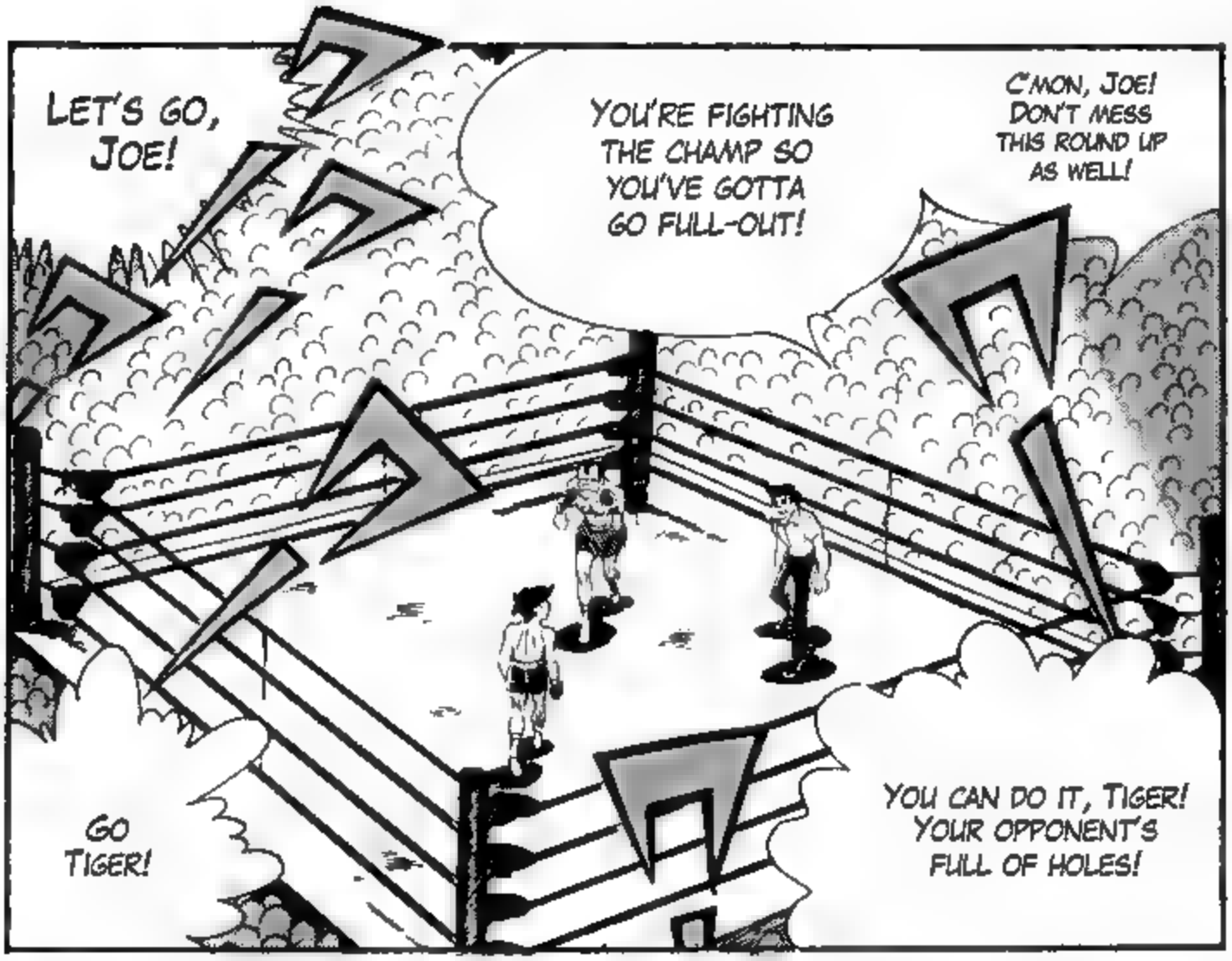
AND THE ONLY WAY TO DO THAT IS WITH A STRONG PUNCH TO THE HEAD!

IF YOU REALLY WANT TO BEAT TIGER, YOU'LL HAVE TO CAST OFF RIKIISHI'S GHOST ONCE AND FOR ALL!

NOW GO, JOE!

R-RIKIISHI'S GHOST....

RIKIISHI...


LET'S GO, JOE!
YOU'RE FIGHTING THE CHAMP SO YOU'VE GOTTA GO FULL-OUT!
C'MON, JOE! DON'T MESS THIS ROUND UP AS WELL!
GO TIGER!
YOU CAN DO IT, TIGER! YOUR OPPONENT'S FULL OF HOLES!

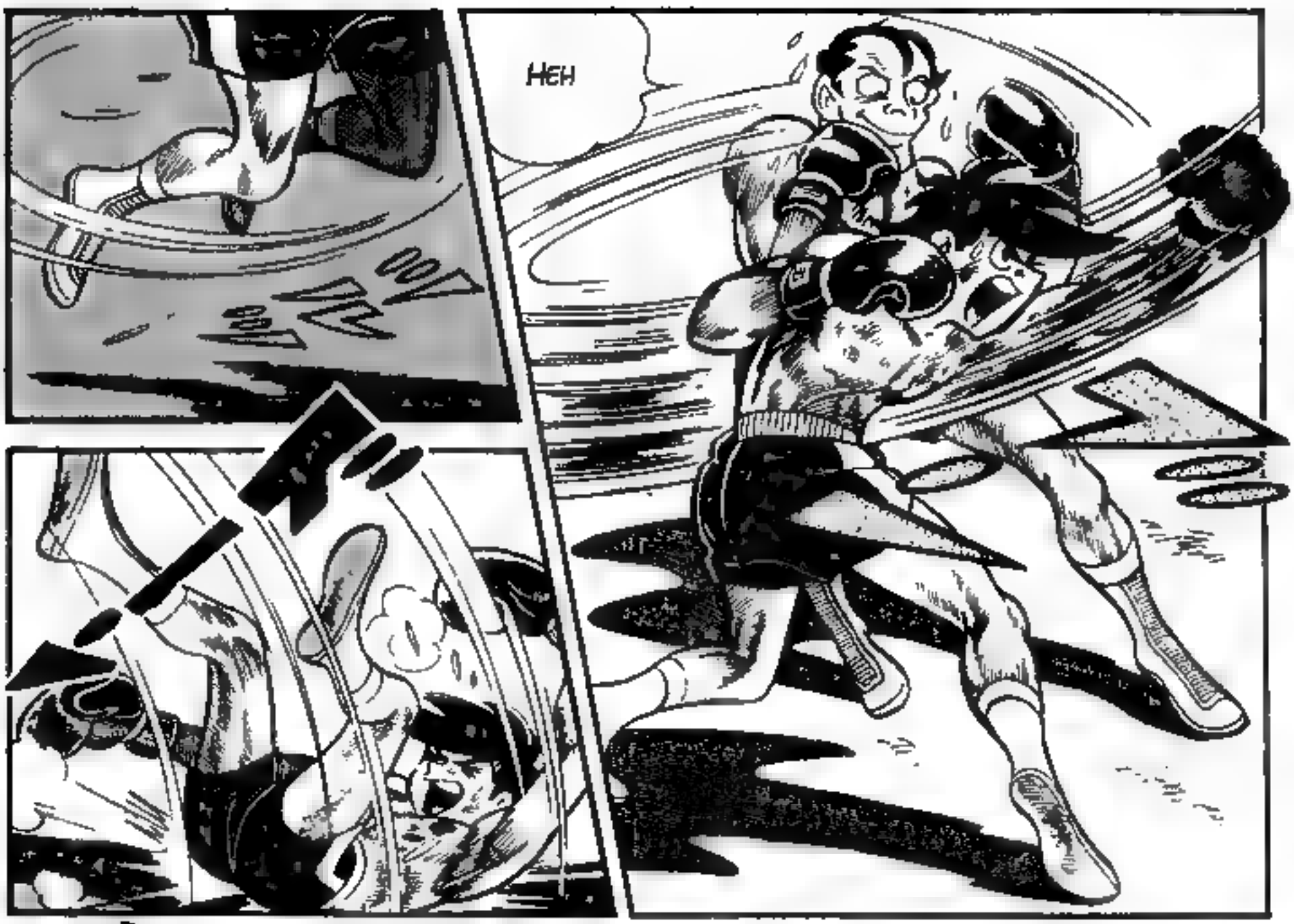
IT CAN'T BE...
IT...
JOE, WATCH OUT!
AHHHH!

AHH!

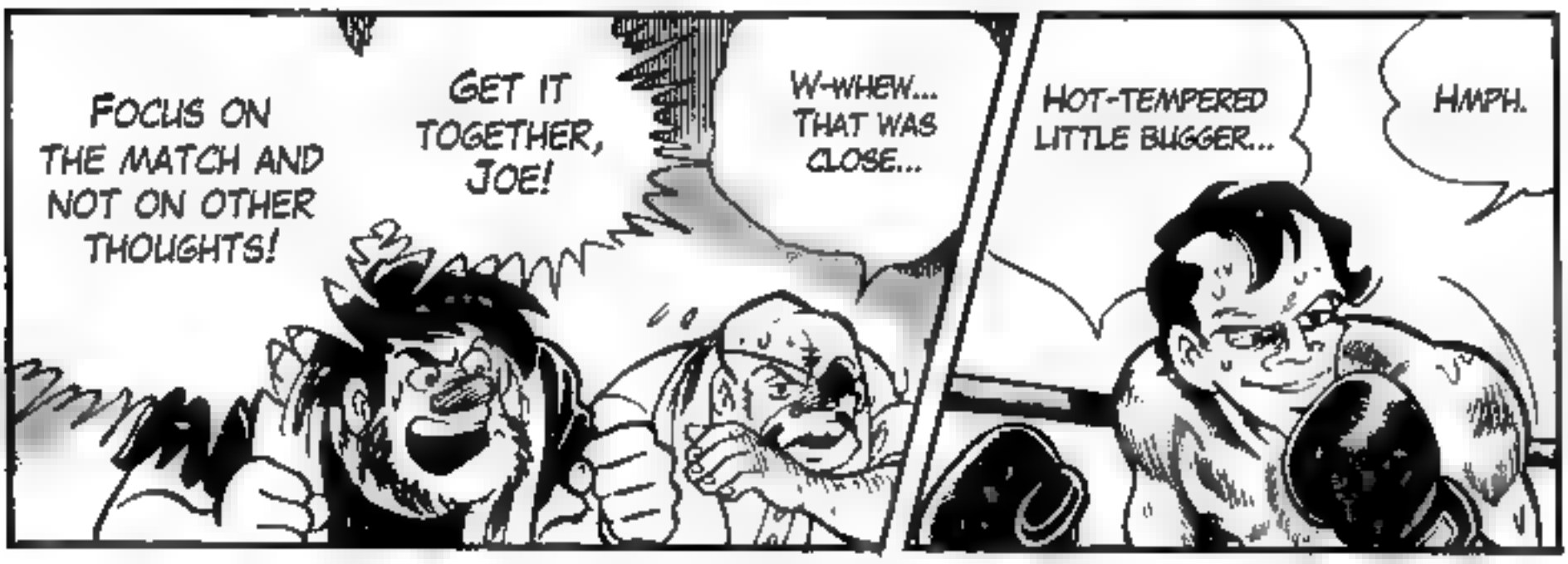
WHOA...

TAKE THIS!

WHY YOU!


HEH

SLIP!


FOCUS ON THE MATCH AND NOT ON OTHER THOUGHTS!
GET IT TOGETHER, JOE!
W-WHEW... THAT WAS CLOSE...
HOT-TEMPERED LITTLE BUGGER...
HMPH.

HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

FIGHT!

WHERE'D ALL YOUR ENERGY AND SPIRIT DISAPPEAR TO!?

KNOCK HIM DOWN JUST LIKE YOU DID IN ROUND 1!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU, JOE!?

I...
I KNOW...

UGH!

HEH

DAMN IT!

....

NGH...

BREAK!

HE'S NEVER BEEN THE TYPE TO RELY ON CLINCHES AS HE PREFERS A DIRECT IN-FIGHTING APPROACH.

YES.

SOMETHING SEEMS VERY OFF ABOUT YABUKI, DOESN'T IT...

BECAUSE OF MY OWN SUBCONSCIOUS...

IF THIS IS...

I SAID BREAK!

IS THERE REALLY NOTHING I CAN DO...?

AND THIS IS STILL MY ARM...

NO, THAT'S CRAZY. THIS IS STILL MY BODY...

UGH...

STOP!

D-

DOWN!

I-IT LANDED!

HOW COULD HE LOOK THE OTHER WAY DURING A MATCH!?

THAT IDIOT...

J-JOE...

DAMN IT!

Y-YABUKI GOES DOWN AFTER RECEIVING A TREMENDOUS UPPERCUT!

THERE'S NO WAY HE'LL BE GETTING BACK UP EASILY AFTER TAKING THAT ONE!

4!

3!

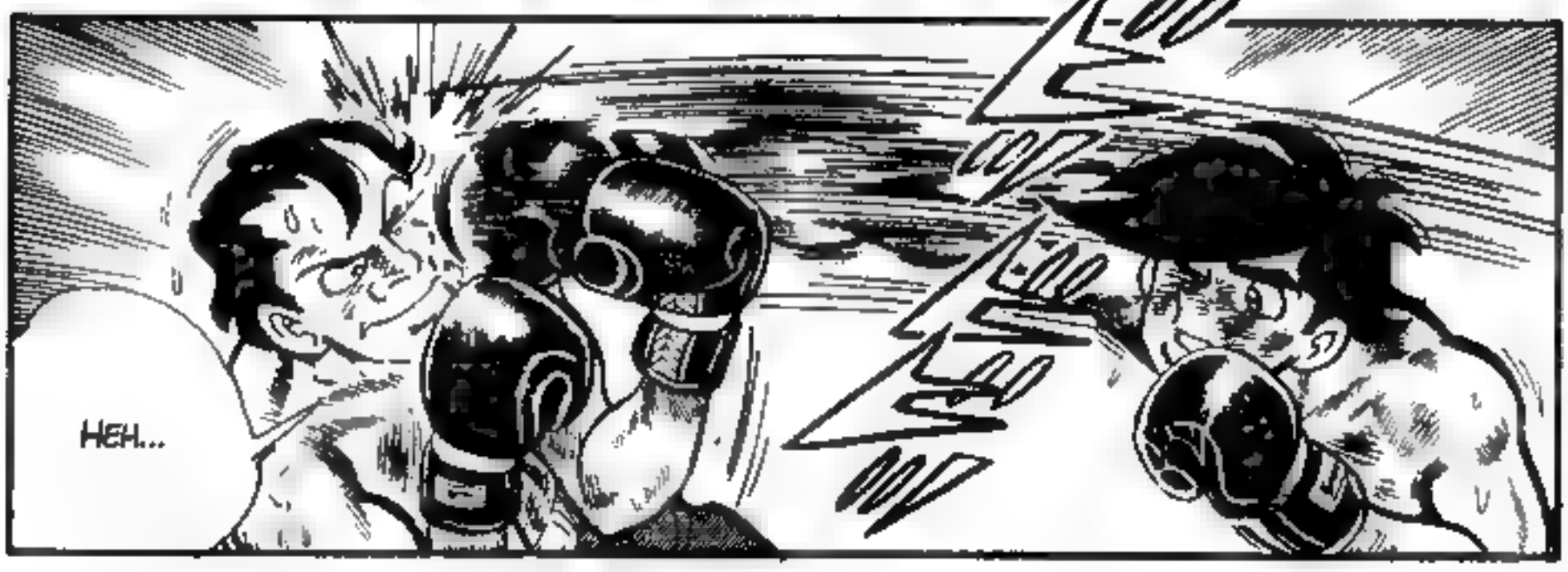
GOD... DAMN IT... I'LL...

5!

BOTH TO MY OWN SELF AND TO THE OLD MAN!

I'LL SHOW THAT... I'M NOT WEIGHED DOWN BY ANYTHING...

FIGHT!


HEH...

HEH

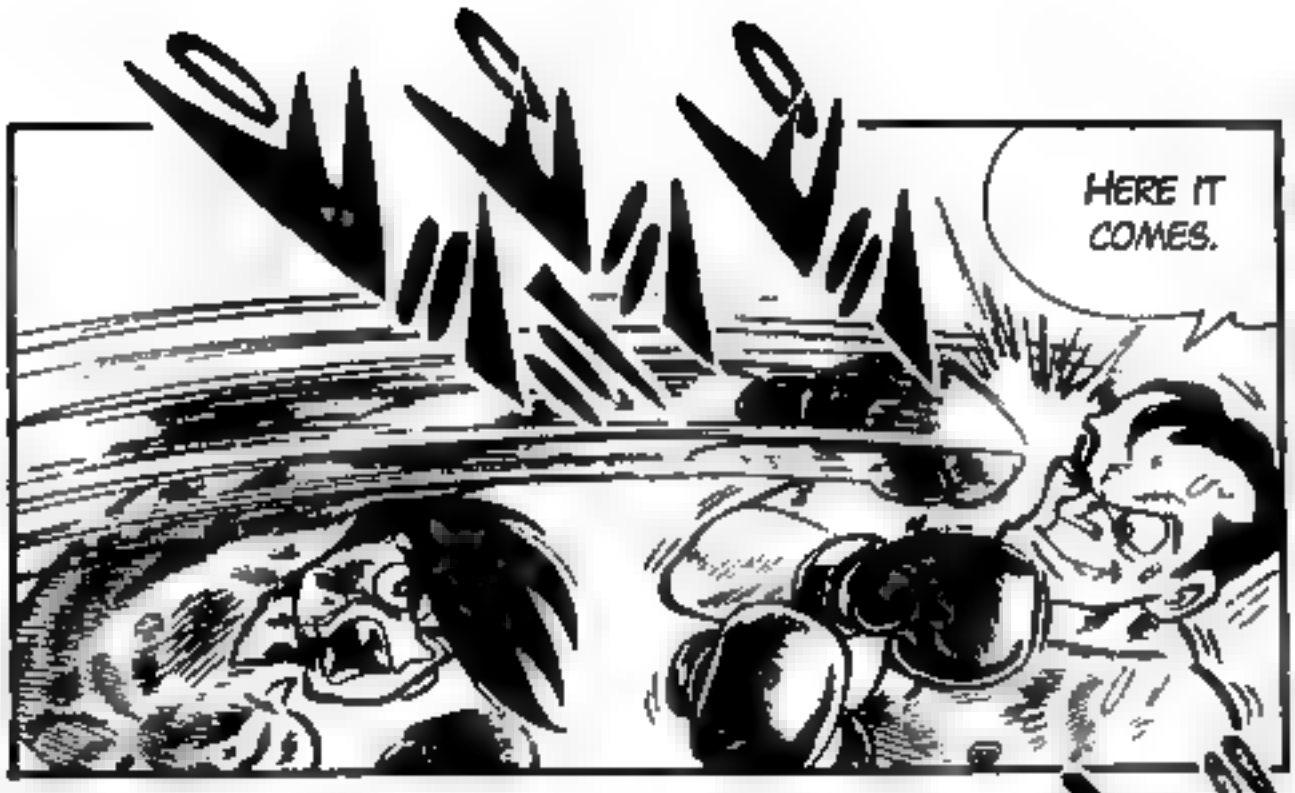
YOU CALL THIS A PUNCH?

I'M A REAL PRO-BOXER UNLIKE YOU!

AND I'M ALSO THE CHAMP!

NO WONDER YOU'RE STILL A ROOKIE!

DID YOU REALLY THINK YOUR LOUSY PUNCHES WOULD WORK ON ME!?


HERE IT COMES.

YOU...

ANOTHER BODY BLOW?
HEH HEH.

AH-

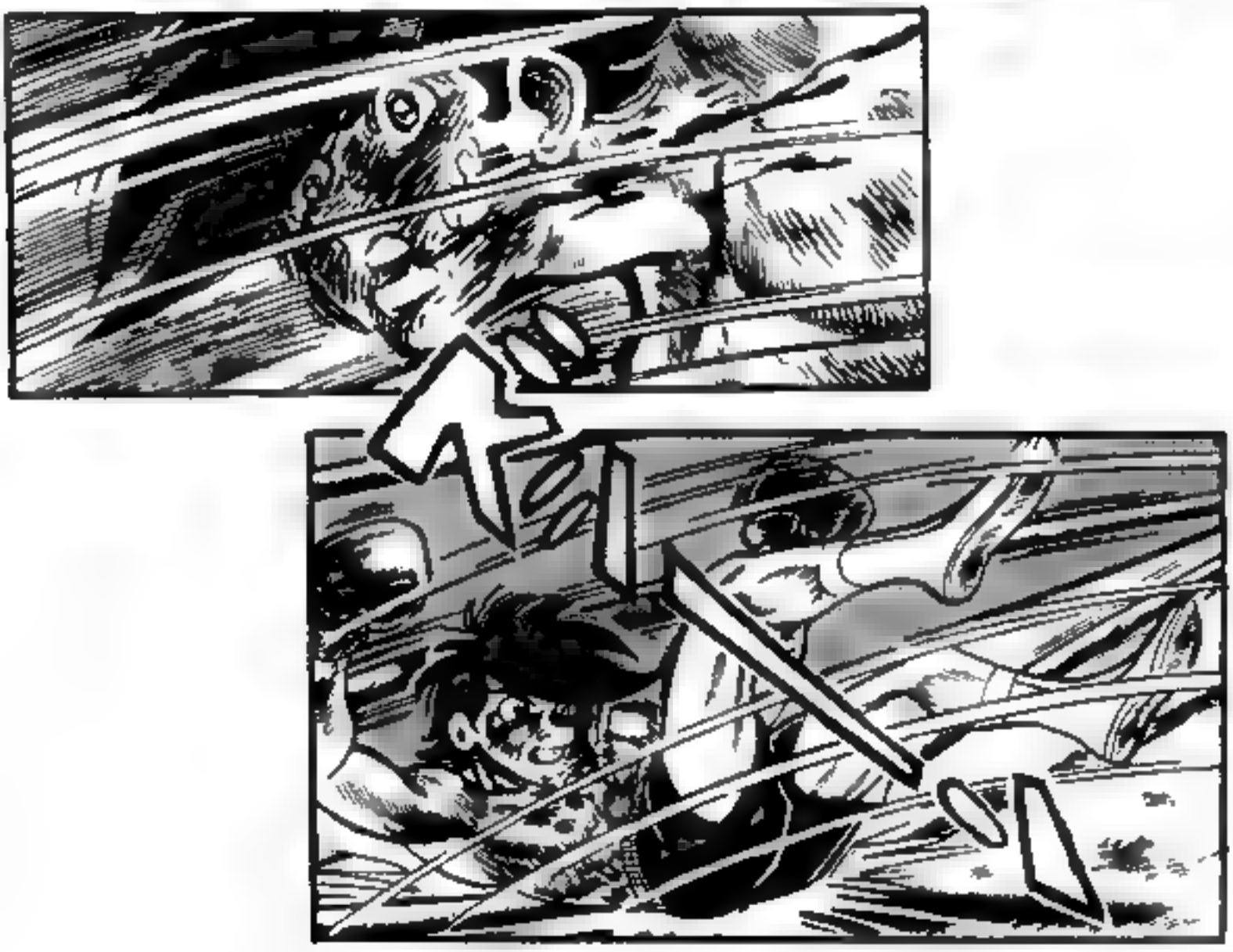
WHEN DID I SWITCH TO A B...
WHEN...

THANKS FOR THE OPENING!

D...

GAHH!

HA



BACK TO YOUR CORNER!

THAT'S A DOWN!

STOP!

NOT GOOD...

JOE...

WHAT HAPPENED TO KILLER JOE...

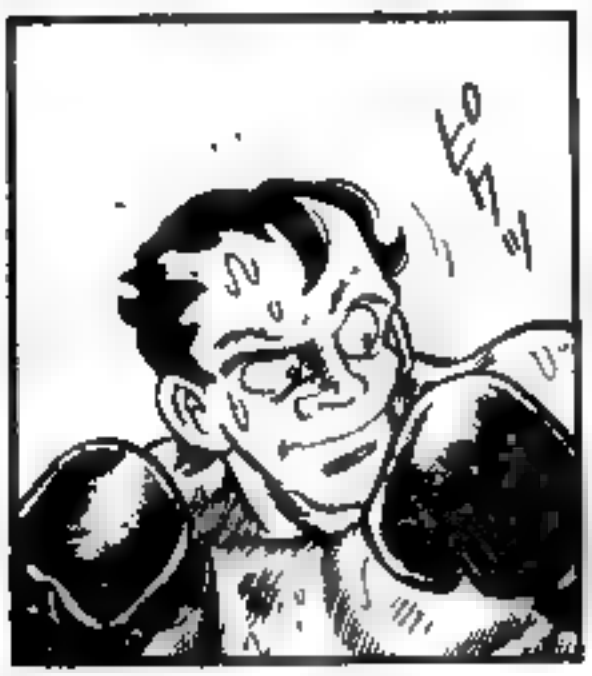
THE MESSENGER FROM HELL...

A-ANOTHER BRILLIANT KNOCKDOWN BY TIGER!

YABUKI NOW LIES SPRAWLING BETWEEN THE ROPES!

6!
5!
UGH!
4!
3!
2!
HAHA...
WILL HE BE ABLE TO STAND!?
AFTER BEING DOWNED TWO TIMES, YABUKI'S LEGS SEEM TO HAVE GIVEN IN.
8!
7!
HUFF HUFF
I... I CAN STILL FIGHT...
9!

HE STANDS JUST BARELY BEFORE THE COUNTDOWN REACHES 10!
YABUKI STANDS!
I SWEAR I'LL CRUSH THAT FACE...
I...
UNTIL I LAND AT LEAST ONE STRONG HIT... TO THE FACE...
THERE'S.... THERE'S NO WAY I'D LET MYSELF BE KNOCKED OUT...
AND PROVE THAT I'M NOT CURSED...
I'LL PROVE TO EVERYONE THAT I STILL CAN...
COVERED IN KETCHUP...
LIKE A TOMATO...
MEANWHILE FOR OZAKI, THIS IS THE PERFECT CHANCE FOR A KO WIN!
YABUKI'S BEEN DRIVEN FAR BACK AS HE POSSIBLY CAN!
IF HE SUFFERS ONE MORE DOWN IN THIS ROUND, THAT'LL BE A TECHNICAL KO BY THE RULES!



HE DOESN'T LOSE HIS COMPOSURE AND CALMLY ADVANCES!
AND JUST AS WE MIGHT EXPECT FROM A CHAMPION,
HE'S AIMING FOR THE FINAL BLOW!

TIME TO FINISH THIS!

GO TO HELL!

I SAID STOP!

STOP!

STOP!

THE HELL ARE YOU STOPPING THE MATCH FOR!?

THE FIGHT IS OVER!

YABUKI LOSES BY TKO!

YABUKI'S COACH, TANGE DANPEI, HAS JUST THROWN IN THE TOWEL!

AHH!

LOOK! YOUR COACH THREW IN THE TOWEL! THIS MATCH IS OVER!

THE CHAMPION HAS PROVEN TO THE AUDIENCE TONIGHT WHY HE'S THE CHAMPION!
YABUKI STANDS DUMBFOUNDED AS HE REALIZES HE'S BEEN BESTED!
A CLEAR VICTORY FOR THE CHAMPION TIGER OZAKI 2 MINUTES AND 46 SECONDS INTO THE 2ND ROUND!

THE CHAMP'S CLEARLY ON A WHOLE 'NOTHER LEVEL!

KILLER JOE!? IS THAT NICKNAME SUPPOSED TO BE IRONIC!?

WAY TO GO, TIGER!

NEVER REALIZED YOU WERE THAT STRONG! MY BAD!

ARE YOU KIDDING ME!? THIS MATCH WAS CLEARLY RIGGED!

MESSENGER FROM HELL, MY ASS!

YOU AIN'T NOTHING BUT A PHONY, JOE!

WHY DID YOU THROW IN THE TOWEL...

WHY...

STOP IT, YOU'RE JUST EMBARRASSING YOURSELF.

A MONSTER PUNCH THROWN WITH ALL OF THE CHAMP'S WEIGHT...

IF I THREW IN THAT TOWEL JUST A SECOND LATER, YOU'D HAVE TAKEN A POWERFUL STRAIGHT RIGHT INTO YOUR FACE.

J-JOE! STOP!

WHY THE HELL WOULD YOU THROW IN THE TOWEL AT THE MOST IMPORTANT MOMENT!?

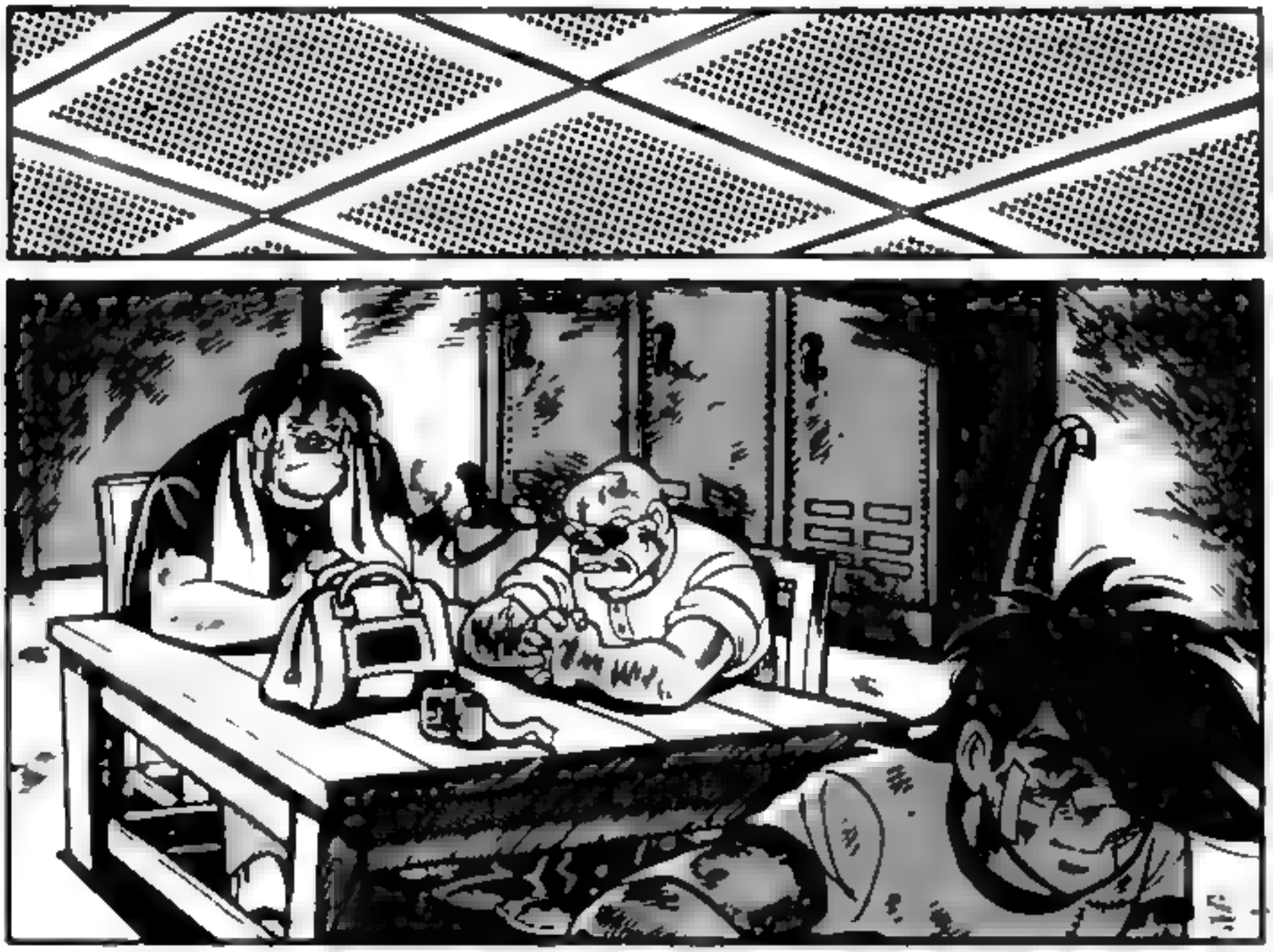
NOW LET'S GO BACK TO THE CHANGE-ROOM.

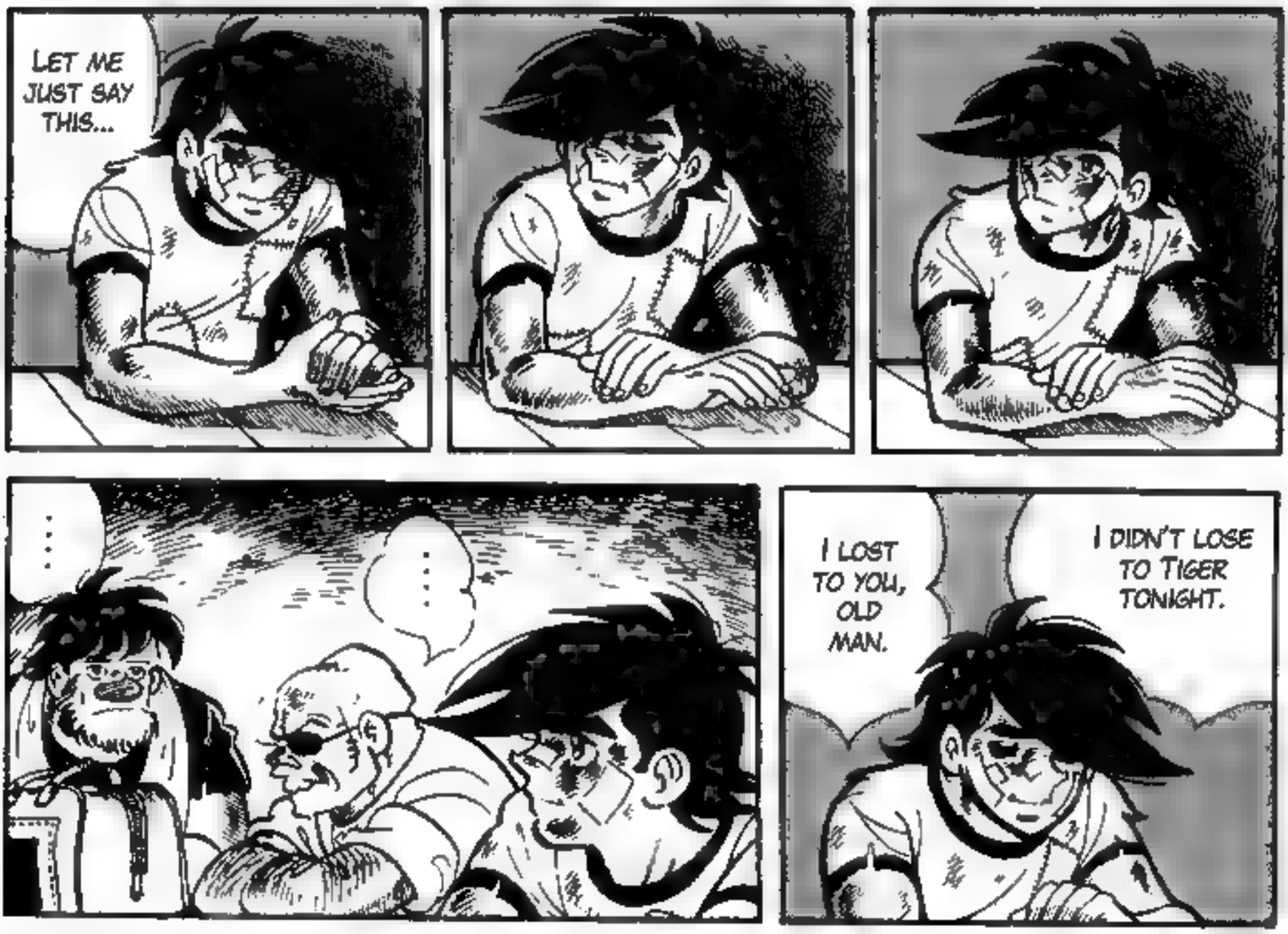
WHO BOASTED A HOT KO-STREAK COULD DO NOTHING AGAINST THE CHAMPION'S STRENGTH.

EVEN YABUKI,

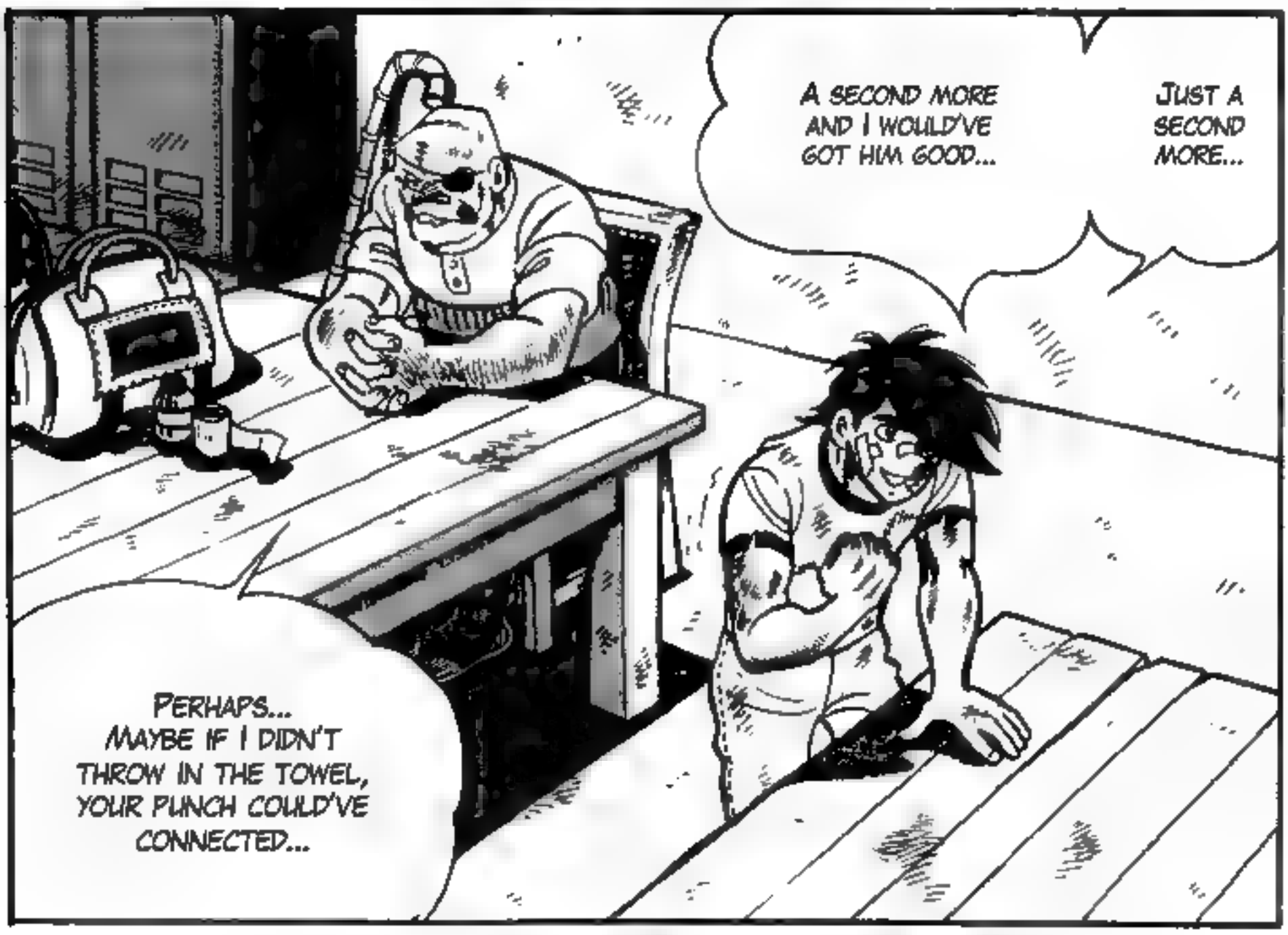
!

IT SEEMS THAT WITH THIS MATCH,
OUR IMAGE OF JOE, THE MAN WHO DEFIES LOGIC AND MAKES THE IMPOSSIBLE POSSIBLE,
HAS NOW BEEN SHATTERED.




LET ME JUST SAY THIS...
I LOST TO YOU, OLD MAN.
I DIDN'T LOSE TO TIGER TONIGHT.
...SEEING AS HOW THE MATCH HAD TURNED COMPLETELY AGAINST YOU,
I GUESS IT WAS FUTILE.
AS A LAST DITCH EFFORT, I THOUGHT POINTING OUT YOUR TRAUMA MIGHT HELP YOU CONQUER IT BUT...
WELL!?
WHAT KIND OF FRICKIN' SECOND TELLS HIS BOXER THAT IT'S ALL OVER OR THAT HE'S CRITICALLY FLAWED IN THE MIDDLE OF A GODDMAN MATCH!?
SAY SOMETHING!

IF YOU WANTED TO SEE IF I COULD GET OVER MY TRAUMA, THEN WHY THE HELL DID YOU THROW IN THE TOWEL JUST AS I WAS ABOUT TO PUNCH TIGER IN THE FACE!?


A SECOND MORE AND I WOULD'VE GOT HIM GOOD...
JUST A SECOND MORE...
PERHAPS... MAYBE IF I DIDN'T THROW IN THE TOWEL, YOUR PUNCH COULD'VE CONNECTED...

YOU CAN'T LAND A PUNCH WHEN IT MATTERS THE MOST...
SO THE FACT IS, LIKE I SAID MULTIPLE TIMES ALREADY,

IT HAD NO REAL FORCE NOR WILL BEHIND IT.
BUT WHATEVER THE CASE, YOUR PUNCH LOOKED FAR TOO WEAK.

THE WOUNDS YOU RECEIVED FROM FIGHTING RIKIISHI JUST PROVED TO BE TOO DEEP.

IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT THOUGH.

I CAN...

SET ME UP AGAINST TIGER ONE MORE TIME!

AND I'LL PROVE IT TO YOU SO HURRY UP AND ARRANGE ANOTHER MATCH!

I CAN STILL PUNCH!

YOU'RE WRONG!

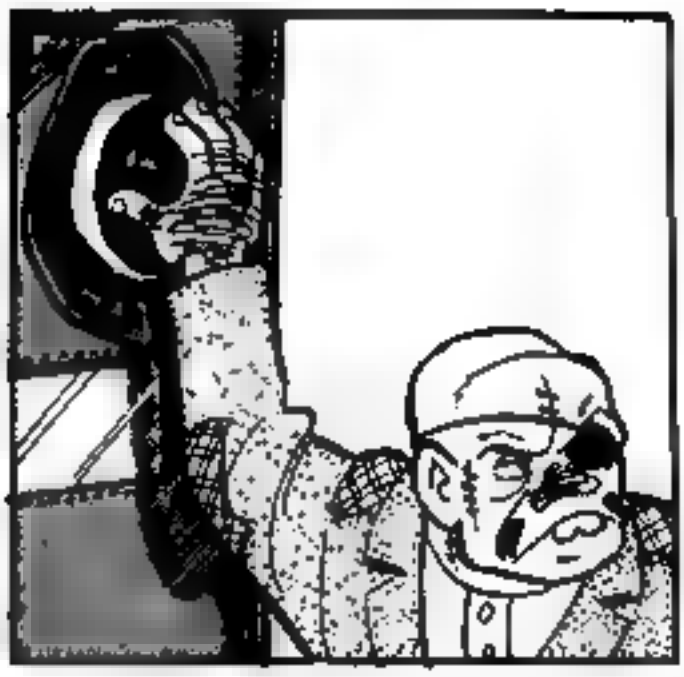
LISTEN TO ME! I'M SERIOUS HERE!

AND I'M SERIOUS TOO, YOU STUBBORN LITTLE PRICK!

I'LL BEAT THAT LIZARD-FACE TO A BLOODY PULP THE NEXT TIME I FIGHT HIM!

IT HAS TO BE HIM!

SIMMER DOWN, YOU'LL ONLY AGGRAVATE YOUR BRUISING...



I'M FAR MORE SERIOUS THAN YOU WHEN IT COMES TO ANYTHING THAT REVOLVED AROUND TONIGHT'S FIGHT.

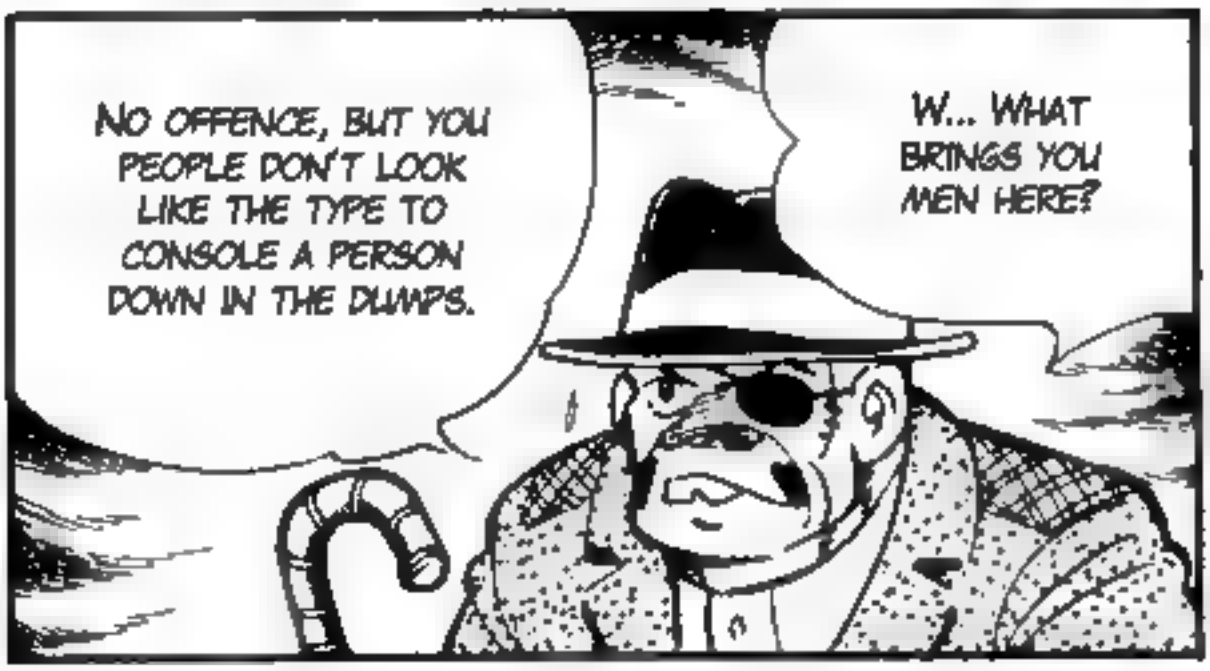
C-CALM DOWN, YOU TWO...

IT'S CLEAR TO ME THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO HAVE YOU RECOVER FROM YOUR TRAUMA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
AND GO ABOUT IT EARNESTLY.
MAKE A RATIONAL JUDGEMENT,
RIGHT NOW, WE HAVE TO CALMLY OBSERVE THE SITUATION,

AH-
O-OLD MAN...

ONLY THEN SHOULD YOU START THINKING ABOUT YOUR NEXT FIGHT.

SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF YELLING GOING ON HERE.
HAHA, WHAT'S WRONG?


NO OFFENCE, BUT YOU PEOPLE DON'T LOOK LIKE THE TYPE TO CONSOLE A PERSON DOWN IN THE DUMPS.
W... WHAT BRINGS YOU MEN HERE?

SO EVEN IF YOU LOST, IT'S NOT ANYTHING WORTH GETTING SO ANGRY AND YELLING YOUR LUNGS OUT.
LUCK IS A CRITICAL FACTOR IN VICTORY

EVEN THE STRONGEST BOXER HAS HIS OFF-DAYS AND UNLUCKY DAYS.
YOUR PLAYER WAS JUST A LITTLE OFF HIS GAME TONIGHT, THAT'S ALL.
OH, DON'T BE SO COLD.

JUST WHAT IS IT YOU WANT TO SAY?

IN FACT, AVOIDING A FIGHT MIGHT ONLY CAUSE YOUR PLAYER'S SKILLS TO RUST EVEN MORE.

SO THERE'S NO NEED TO START AVOIDING FIGHTS ENTIRELY.

WHY DON'T WE ARRANGE ANOTHER MATCH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE?

WELL... I'M REALLY ONLY SAYING THIS BECAUSE IT SEEMS LIKE YOUR PLAYER WANTS TO.

HOW ABOUT HARAJIMA FROM MY GYM?

YOU ALREADY DRAGGED JOE'S CRITICAL FLAW OUT INTO THE OPEN SO WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT?

AND AS FOR THE REST OF YOU...

YOU JUST SHUT YOUR TRAP AND STAY STILL!

NOW THAT'S WHAT I EXPECT FROM THE OWNERS OF TOP-RATE CLUBS!

T-THANKS A BUNCH!

WE'LL LEAVE RIGHT NOW.

BUT IF YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE EVERYTHING WE SAY THE WRONG WAY, THEN FINE.

WE'RE ONLY OFFERING ANOTHER MATCH OUT OF GOOD-WILL.

COULD YOU PLEASE STOP IT WITH YOUR BASELESS ACCUSATIONS?

THAT OLD MAN'S JUST FEELING A LITTLE DOWN 'CAUSE I FOUGHT BADLY TONIGHT.

I'LL CONVINCE HIM LATER SO PLEASE SET ME UP WITH ANOTHER BOXER!

JOE!

N-NO, WAIT!

. . . .

CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE MORE ABOUT HIM?

YOU ASKED ME IF I WAS FINE WITH HARAJIMA, RIGHT?

JUST A MINUTE AGO,

I'M THE ONE WHO'S FIGHTING, NOT YOU! SO STAY OUT OF IT!

JOE, YOU-

HE'S CURRENTLY RANKED 1ST AMONG BANTAMWEIGHTS.

HARAJIMA RYUU. MY GYM'S SHINING STAR.

YOU BETTER BUY SOME INSURANCE FOR YOUR FACE BEFORE OUR MATCH...!

AND PASS THIS MESSAGE ONTO HARAJIMA AS WELL:

I'LL GLADLY TAKE HIM ON!

GREAT!

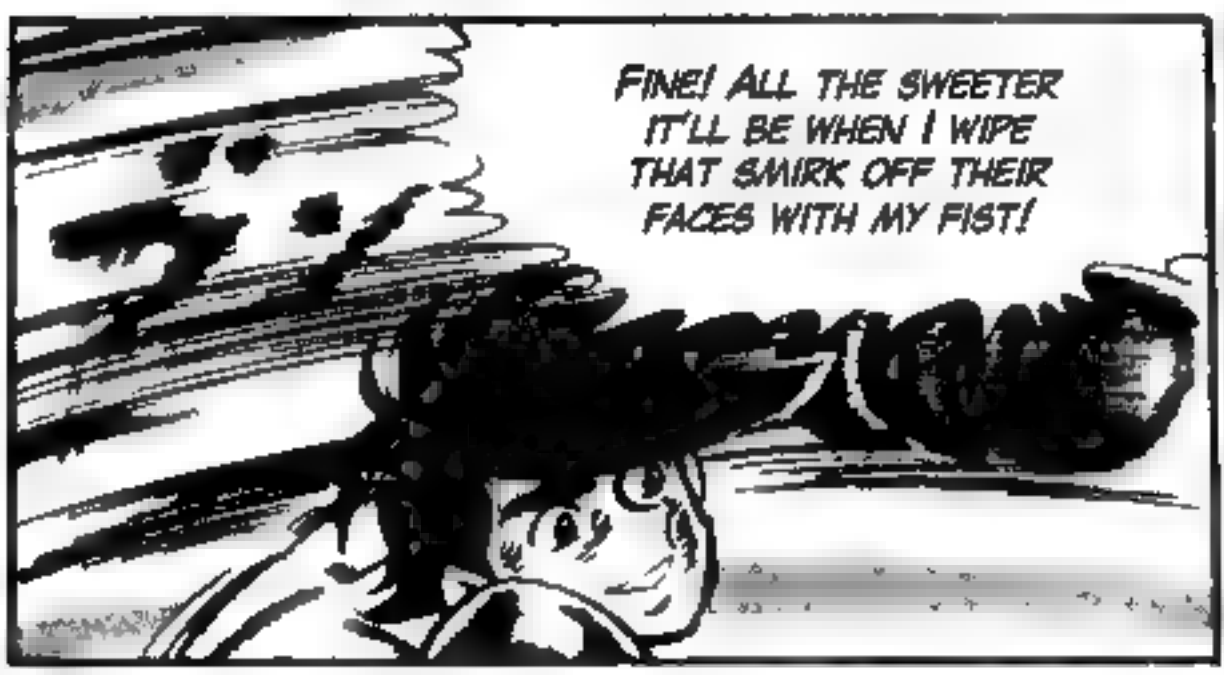
SET OUR MATCH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!

AS LONG AS IT'S FINE WITH HIS SCHEDULE,

BAD

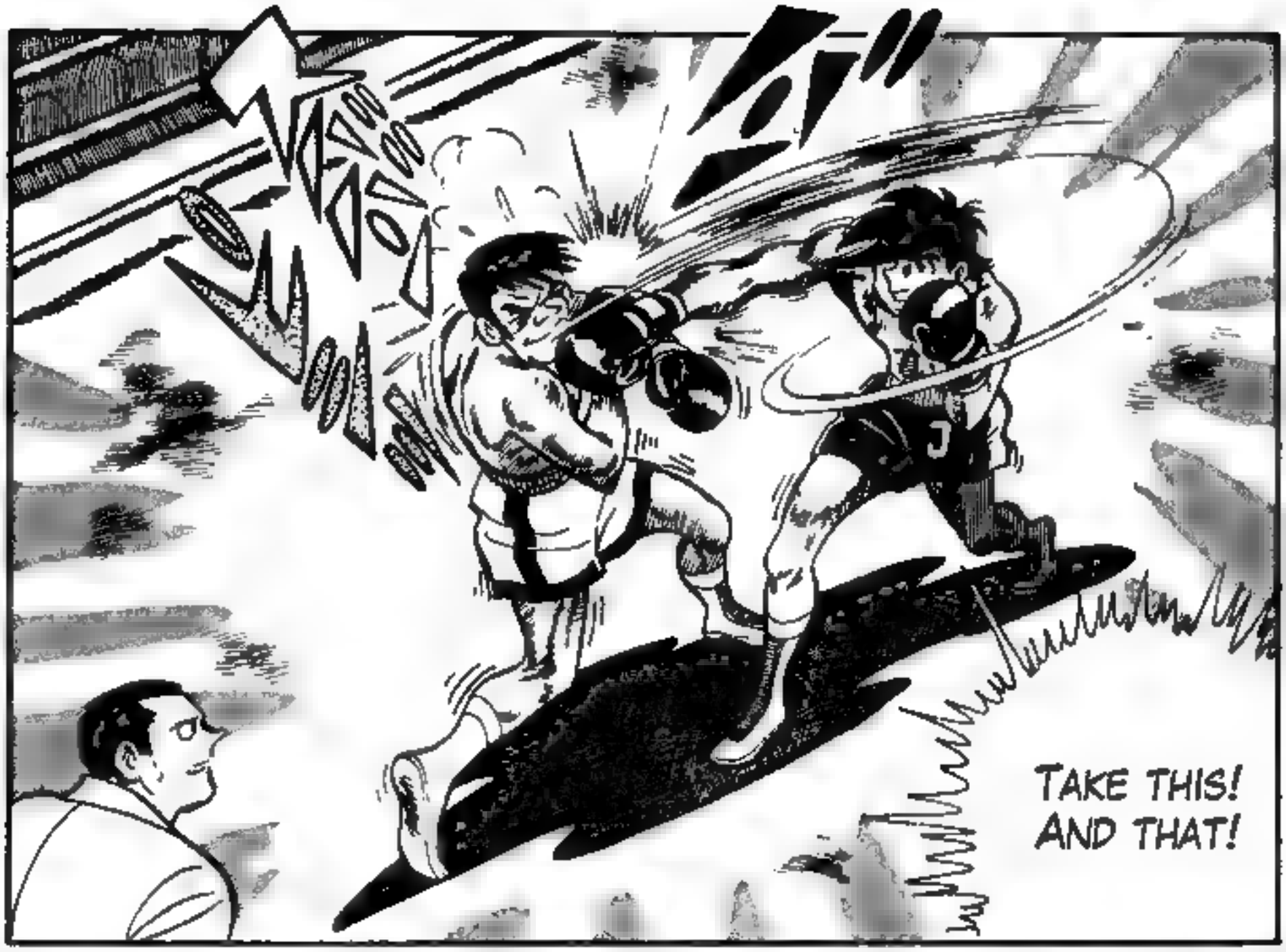
IT'S TO SUFFER WHILE CARRYING A FALSE HOPE THAT'LL NEVER COME TRUE...
FOR HUMANS, THERE'S SOMETHING FAR WORSE THAN WALLOWING IN ABSOLUTE DESPAIR...

BUT THE MORE YOU STRUGGLE, THE DEEPER YOU SINK IN TO THE HOPELESS ABYSS AROUND YOU..
YOU KEEP CHARGING AHEAD, ALL THE WHILE THINKING, "NEXT TIME. MAYBE NEXT TIME, THINGS'LL GO BETTER."
INSTEAD OF GIVING YOUR BODY AND MIND SOME TIME TO RECUPERATE,


FINE! ALL THE SWEETER IT'LL BE WHEN I WIPE THAT SMIRK OFF THEIR FACES WITH MY FIST!

HEH HEH... SO I'M A HAS-BEEN BOXER WHO CAN'T EVEN HIT SOMEONE'S FACE NOW, AM I..?

BULLS-EYE!
TAKE THAT!


TAKE THIS!
AND THAT!

NOW KO HARAJIMA SO YOU CAN EARN THE RIGHT TO CHALLENGE TIGER AGAIN!
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT! IT'S YOUR STUPID MANAGER'S FAULT FOR EVEN AGREEING TO THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE!
YOUR LAST FIGHT WAS JUST A LITTLE TOO MUCH TO HANDLE 'CAUSE YOU WERE UP AGAINST THE CHAMP!
ATTA BOY! THAT'S THE KILLER JOE WE ALL KNOW AND LOVE!

YOU DON'T HAVE TO TELL ME, 'CAUSE I'M ALREADY PLANNING ON IT!

STOP!

I DID TELL YOU TO INSURE THAT FACE OF YOURS BEFORE THE MATCH, DIDN'T I?

HAHA. PROBLEM?

THAT NONE OF THOSE PUNCHES HAVE ANY POWER BEHIND THEM.

BUT IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT,

A FLASHY SHOW FOR MAYBE THE FANS AT LEAST...

NOTHING BUT JUST A SHOW...

WHAT'S WRONG?

HE SUBCONSCIOUSLY LETS THAT CHANCE GO TO WASTE BY AVOIDING THE FACE.

NOT ONLY THAT, WHENEVER THERE'S A PERFECT CHANCE FOR A CROSS-COUNTER, HIS ONCE FAMED-SPECIALTY,

C'MON! THE BELL RANG! GET YOUR ASS IN HERE!

OH...

HMM... YEAH, YEAH, PRETTY GOOD.

DID YA SEE ME PUMMEL HIS FACE?

SO WHAT'D YOU THINK?

ｶﾞﾝｶﾞﾝｶﾞﾝ

HEH HEH

ｱﾝ!!

AHH!

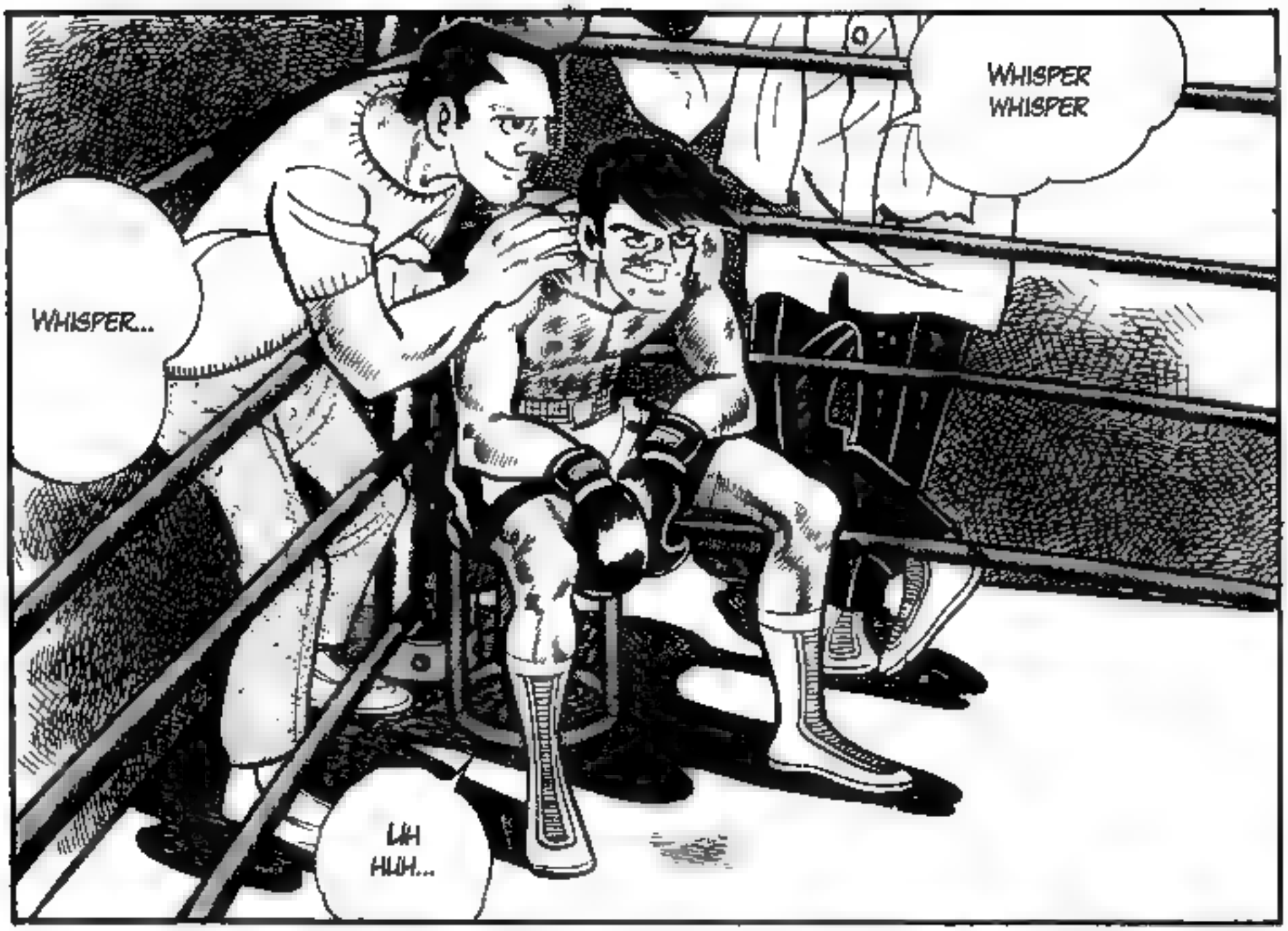
WHAT IS IT? WHAT'RE YOU LOOKING AT?

天王寺

W-WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE!?

T-TIGER IS... IN HARAJIMA'S CORNER...?

WHISPER WHISPER


WHISPER WHISPER
WHISPER...
UH HUH...

THEN...
GOT IT.

HAHA.
RIGHT, RIGHT.
UH HUH.

HEH HEH

HEE HEE HEE

SO JUST COOL IT!

THERE AIN'T NO RULE AGAINST LAUGHING WHILE STAYING IN YOUR OWN CORNER.

THE HELL ARE THEY LAUGHIN' ABOUT!?

DAMMIT!

W-WHAT'RE YOU DOING, JOE!?

WITH THOSE PUNCHES, IT'S NO WONDER HE'S LAUGHING.

EVEN IF THAT WERE SO,

BUT... BUT THEN WHY...

THERE'S NO WAY HE CAN BE LAUGHING AFTER THAT...

HE... HE HAD HIS FACE CLOBBERED THROUGHOUT THAT ENTIRE FIRST ROUND...

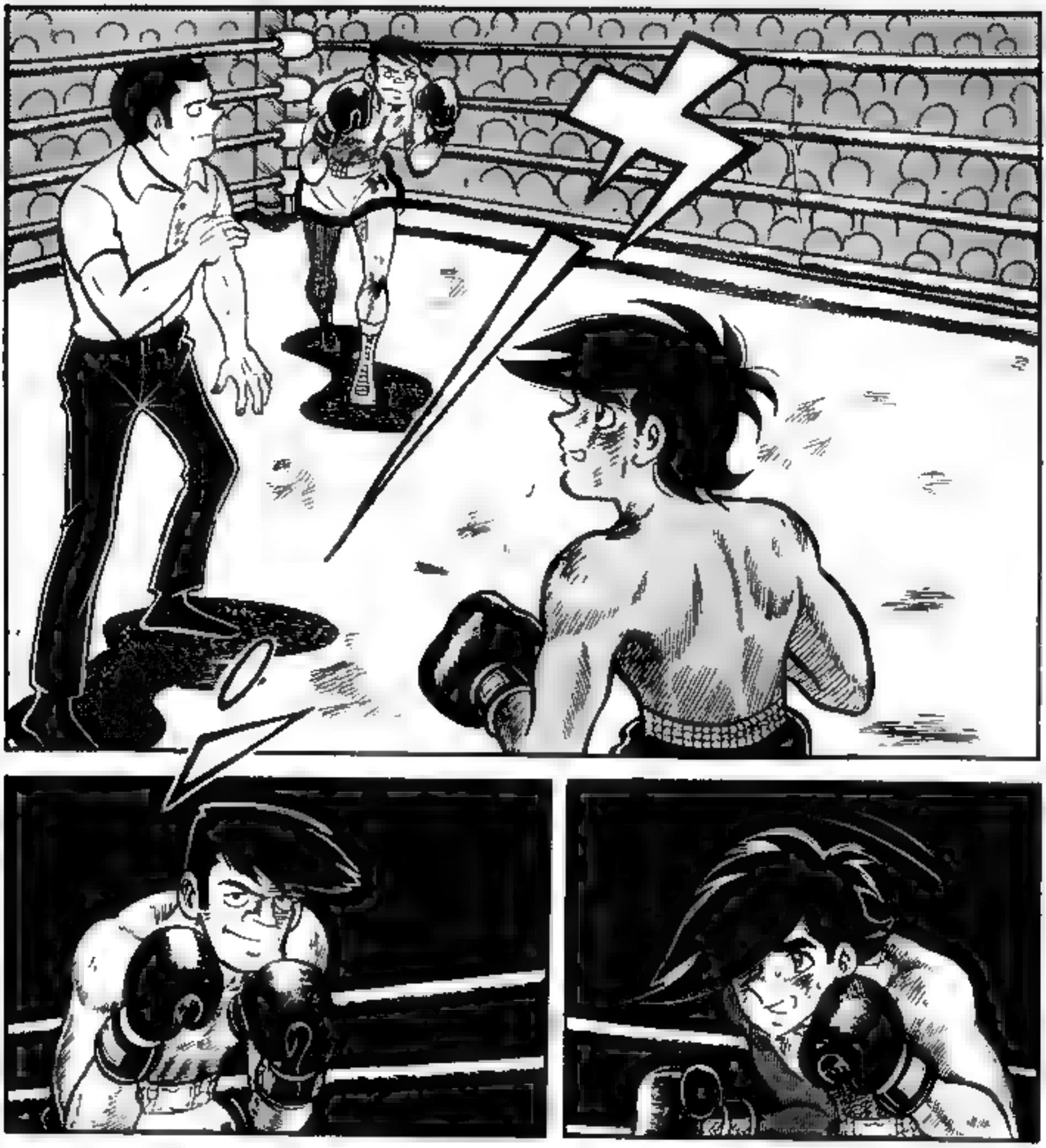
HEY! KEEP THAT CHIN UP!

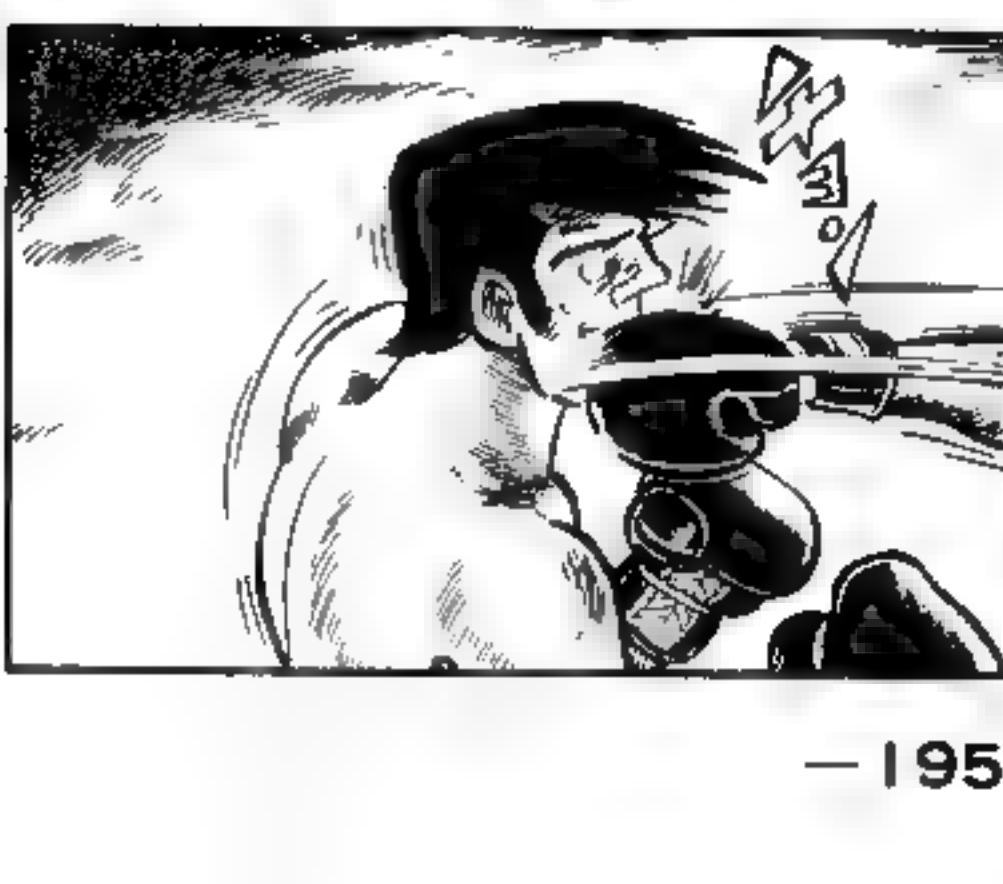
YOU BARELY SCRATCHED HIS FACE THAT ROUND. ALMOST LIKE YOU WERE HITTING HIM WITH A MERE FLY SWATTER.

EOO EOO

IF YOU'RE PISSED OFF, THEN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT! GO RIGHT FOR THE TEMPLE OF HIS HEAD!

H-HERE'S YOUR MOUTHGUARD, JOE.





A FLY SWATTER, IS IT NOW...

!!
A FLY SWATTER!
YOU STILL THINK THIS! IS! JUST!
OOF

KEEP AT IT!

T-THAT'S IT, JOE!

A GUY WHO'S SMILING AND LAUGHING DURING A SERIOUS MATCH SHOULD HAVE THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS KNOCKED OUT OF HIM!

THAT'S IT, JOE!

PUSH HIM A LITTLE HARDER AND THEN GO FOR THE BODY-BLOW FINISHER!

DON'T BE STUPID...

DAMMIT!

HUFF HUFF

HEH

ドオ

HAHHH!

SO THERE'S NO WAY THE NO.1 RANKED HARAJIMA OF ALL PEOPLE WOULD LEAVE HIS BODY OPEN FOR JOE.

ANYBODY WHO'S A SOMEBODY IN THE BOXING ASSOCIATION KNOWS JOE CAN ONLY GO FOR THE BODY-BLOWS AS HIS FINISHERS NOW.

. . . .

. . . .

JUST KEEP AIMING UP HIGH!

F-FINE THEN! JUST GO FOR THE TEMPLE, CHIN, OR WHATEVER!

HE'S DESPERATELY BATTLING WITH RIKIISHI'S DEAD SPIRIT AS WE SPEAK!

JOE'S OUT THERE RIGHT NOW GIVING HIS ALL TO HIT HIS OPPONENT'S FACE!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?

HEY NOW.

WOULD IT SERIOUSLY KILL YOU TO SAY EVEN ONE THING TO HELP ENCOURAGE HIM!?

ANYBODY COULD BE A SECOND IF ALL THEY HAD TO DO WAS GRUMBLE AND WHINE FROM THE CORNER!

AREN'T YOU HIS SECOND!? AREN'T YOU HIS COACH AND MANAGER!?

SHUT UP, YOU BIG IDIOT.

. . . .

NO MATTER HOW MUCH WE YELL, IT'S NOT GONNA HELP HIM THROW A FINISHING BLOW TO HARAJIMA'S FACE.

BUT SAYING ANYTHING TO HIM IS USELESS RIGHT NOW.

THEN I WOULD'VE TALKED MY MOUTH OFF UNTIL I LOST MY VOICE.

IF THIS WERE A PROBLEM WE COULD FIX WITH WORDS ALONE,

SINCE WHEN DID YOU START TALKING BACK TO ME THAT WAY...?

NISHI,

ホホ…!

WHAT, DID I HURT YOUR FEE-

SO YOU'RE JUST GONNA KEEP ON CROSSING YOUR ARMS AND DOING JACK WHILE YOUR PLAYER CONTINUES TO SUFFER?

IT'S LIKE I'M TALKING TO A BRICK WALL HERE!

GOD!

YABUKI JOE MUST BE THE UNLUCKIEST PERSON IN THE WORLD FOR HAVING A COACH LIKE YOU!

UGH!

SAY USELESS ONE MORE TIME! I DARE YA!

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT FOR, YOU USELESS DUMBASS!

WHA-

I'M ONLY SAYING THE TRUTH, YOU USELESS HACK!

USELESS! COMPLETELY USELESS!

AND YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE LITTLE MISS SKINNY OR SOMETHING!? HA!

WHA!?

OH, SO YOU WANNA TAKE ME ON NOW, FATASS!?

HAHA! THIS IS EVEN BETTER THAN THE ACTUAL MATCH!

C'MON! GET 'IM!

YABUKI'S SECONDS, COACH TANGE AND NISHI ARE FIGHTING EACH OTHER ON THE RINGSIDE!

AHHH! WOULD YOU TAKE A LOOK AT THAT!

I SAID STOP!

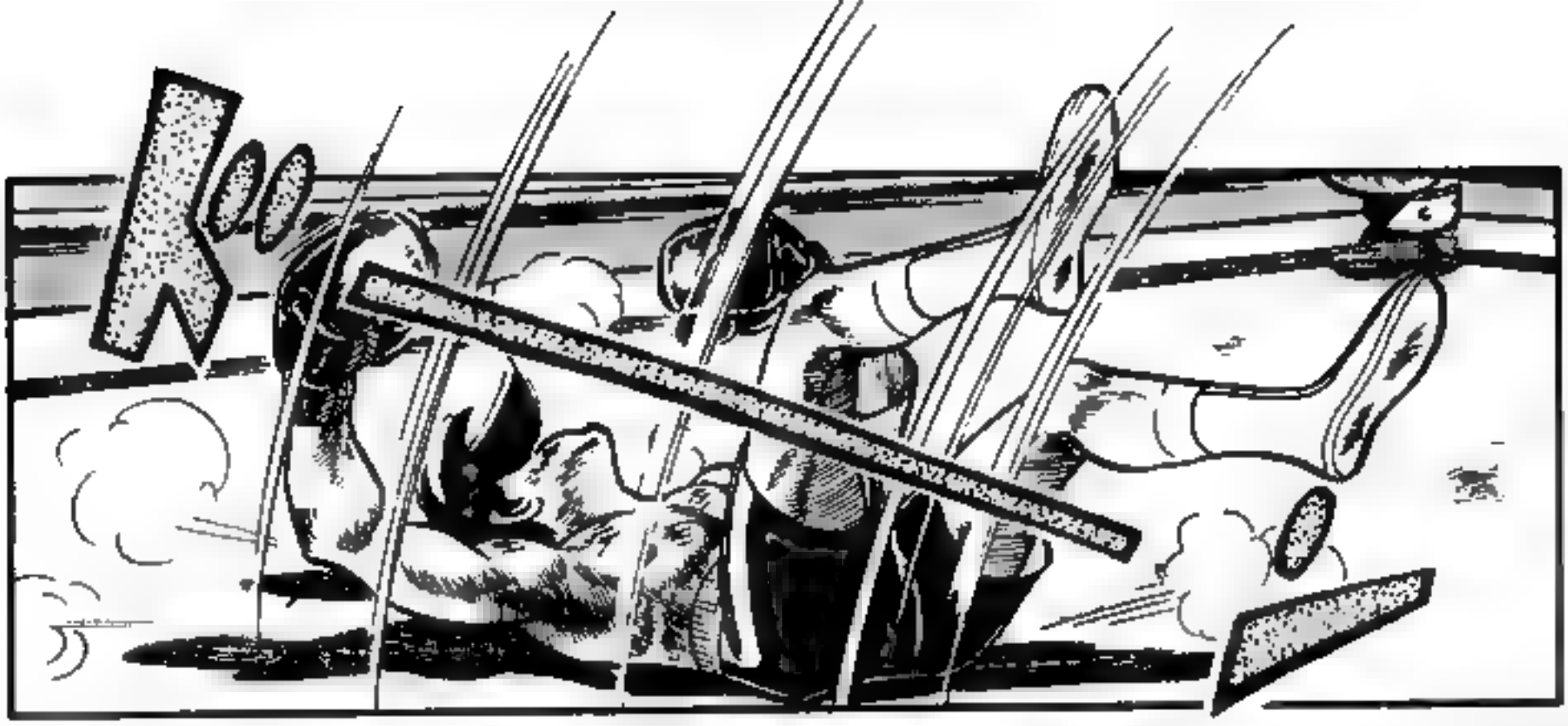
STOP IT!

H-HEY! THERE'S A MATCH GOING ON RIGHT NOW!

HAHA

YOU'RE JUST BEGGING FOR AN ATTACK,

IF YOU LOOK THE OTHER WAY, YOU KNOW!


KOO

JOE!
J-JOE ...!

WHAT'S GOING ON!?
AHHHH! JOE WENT DOWN!
C'MON, JOE! STAND UP!

4!
3!
5!

UGHH...

7!
6!
8!
HEH
SNICKER
SNICKER
YOU'RE LAUGHING AGAIN, AREN'T YOU...
YOU...
FIGHT ON!
THE HELL'S SO DAMN FUNNY!?

I SWEAR I'LL...

HUFF

HUFF

HUFF

DAMN IT, I SWEAR I'LL...

PANT

PANT

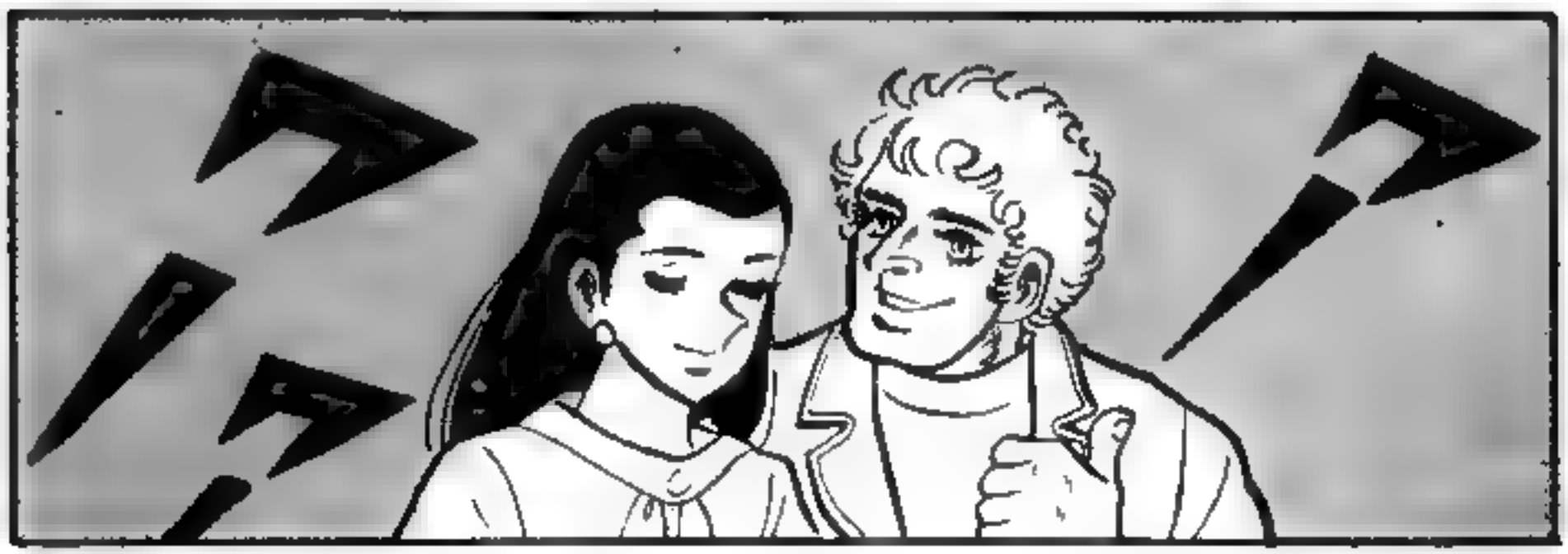
PANT

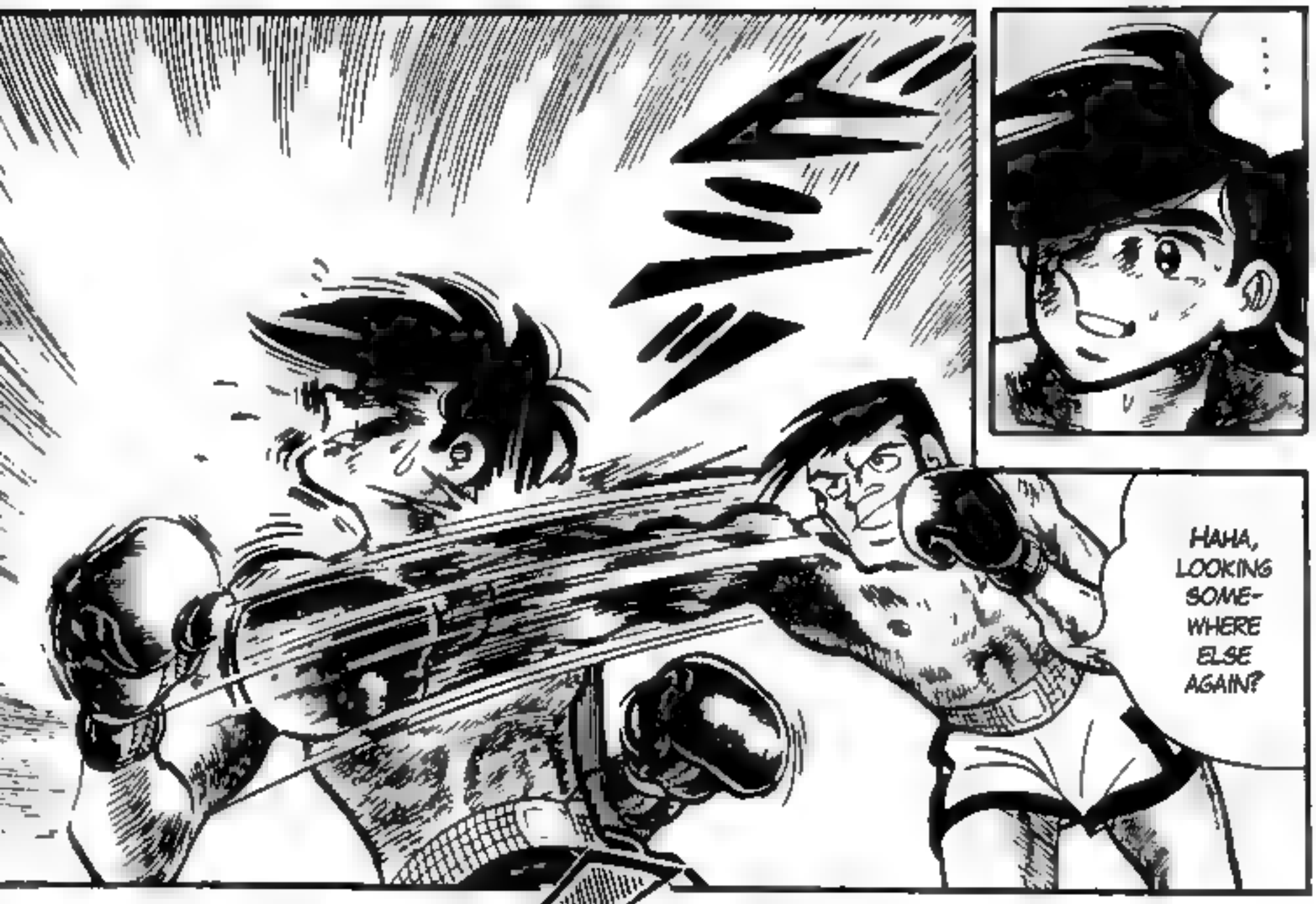
GET IT TOGETHER!

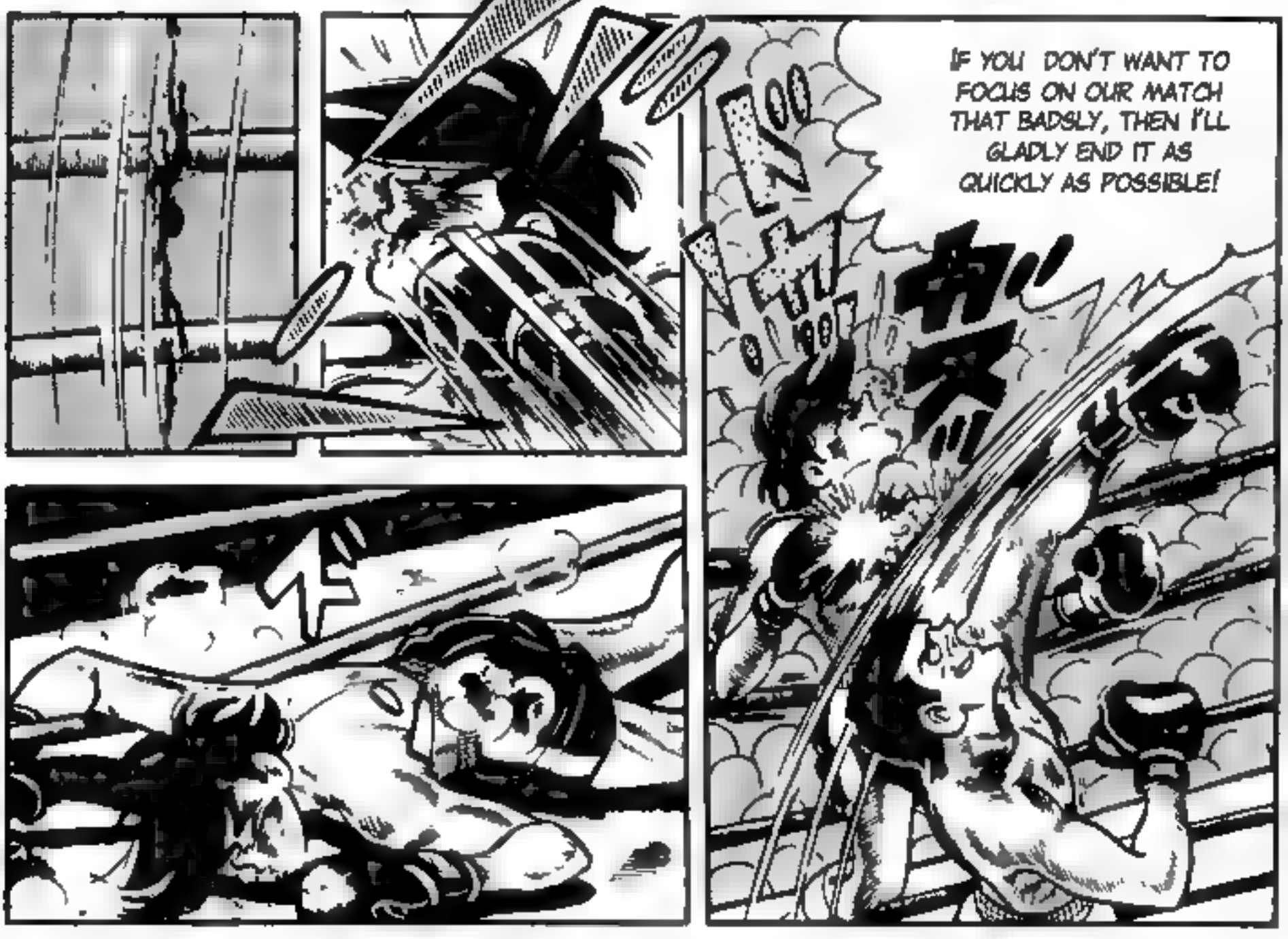
OH C'MON, JOE! THE HELL'S THE MATTER WITH YOU!

YOUKO...

DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE GOING TO SHOW A REPEAT PERFORMANCE OF YOUR FIGHT AGAINST TIGER NOW!
C'MON, JOE!
I'M DONE WITH YOU FOR GOOD IF YOU END UP LOSING TO HARAJIMA TONIGHT!




. . . .
HAHA, LOOKING SOME-WHERE ELSE AGAIN?

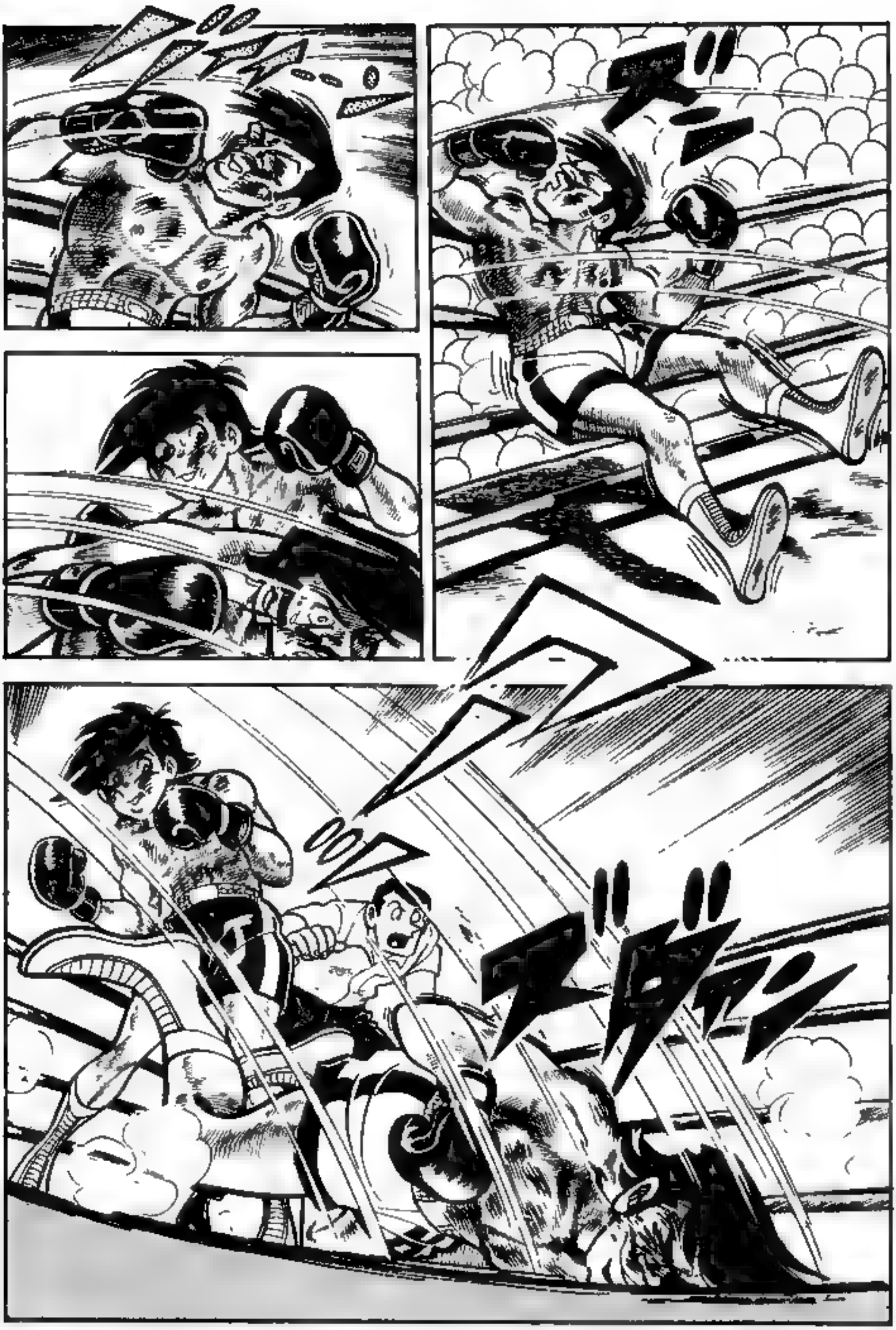

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO FOCUS ON OUR MATCH THAT BADSLY, THEN I'LL GLADLY END IT AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE!

3!
2!
1!
THAT'S A DOWN!
STOP!
FIGHT ON!
W-WHO'S THAT FOREIGNER...?
I FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN HIM SOMEWHERE BEFORE...
ANNOYING SON OF A...
ビュ〃〃
WHOA-

DON'T GET FULL OF YOURSELF!

JOE HIT HIM RIGHT IN THE TEMPLE OF HIS HEAD AS HARD AS HE COULD!

AHHH! HE... HE HIT HIM...



A GOOD OL' KNOCKOUT!
THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!
HAVEN'T SEEN A STRONG PUNCH LIKE THAT FOR QUITE A WHILE FROM YOU!

A-AHHH...!
HARAJIMA...!

HE... HE LANDED A HUGE HIT TO HARAJIMA'S... HEAD...?
W-WHA... JOE JUST...

2!

3!

1!

4!

HURRY! BEFORE THE COUNTDOWN FINISHES!

STAND UP, HARAJIMA!

S-STAND UP!

I... I HIT HIM...

7!

5!

6!

8!

ARE YOU FINE TO FIGHT?

Y-YEAH...

FIGHT ON!

NOW'S YOUR CHANCE, YABUKI!

CHAAARGE!

YOUR CORNER'S THIS WAY!

H-HARAJIMA, HANG IN THERE...

STOP!

THE BELL JUST RANG!

JOE, THAT WAS FANTASTIC!

YOU GOT HIM RIGHT IN THE TEM-

JOE...?
COME ON, THE BELL RANG ALREADY.
HOW LONG ARE YA PLANNING TO STAND THERE!?

YOU NEED TO SIT DOWN AND TAKE A BREATHER.
QUICKLY.
YOU DON'T LOOK SO GOOD.
WHAT'S WRONG?
JOE...?

N-NO, IT'S NOTHING...

ARE YA EVEN LISTENIN'!?

YOU MANAGED TO BLOW AWAY RIKIISHI'S GHOST WITH THAT PUNCH JUST NOW.

WELL IN ANY CASE, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE RECOVERED NOW.

AND YOU! FAN HIM WITH THE TOWEL!

TAKE THAT MOUTH GUARD OUT AND RINSE HIS MOUTH!

天王寺

NOT THAT WAY. THE OTHER SIDE WHERE HARAJIMA IS.

YOUKO?

YOUKO'S HERE...

WHO'S THAT FOREIGNER WITH HER?

SO SHE'S HERE, IS SHE... SHE'S A STRANGE ONE, THAT'S FOR SURE...

YEAH, I FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE TOO..

HM..

MAYBE IT WAS FROM SOME MAGAZINE ..

I FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE BUT I CAN'T QUITE PLACE MY FINGER ON IT.

FOREIGNER?

HE'S NOT THAT KIND OF GUY..

NO...

BUT MAYBE HE'S SOME FAMOUS MOVIE STAR FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY.

WELL, I CAN'T REALLY MAKE OUT HIS FACE TOO WELL FROM HERE, WHAT WITH MY BAD EYE AND ALL,

NISHI, GET THE VASELINE!

SURE.

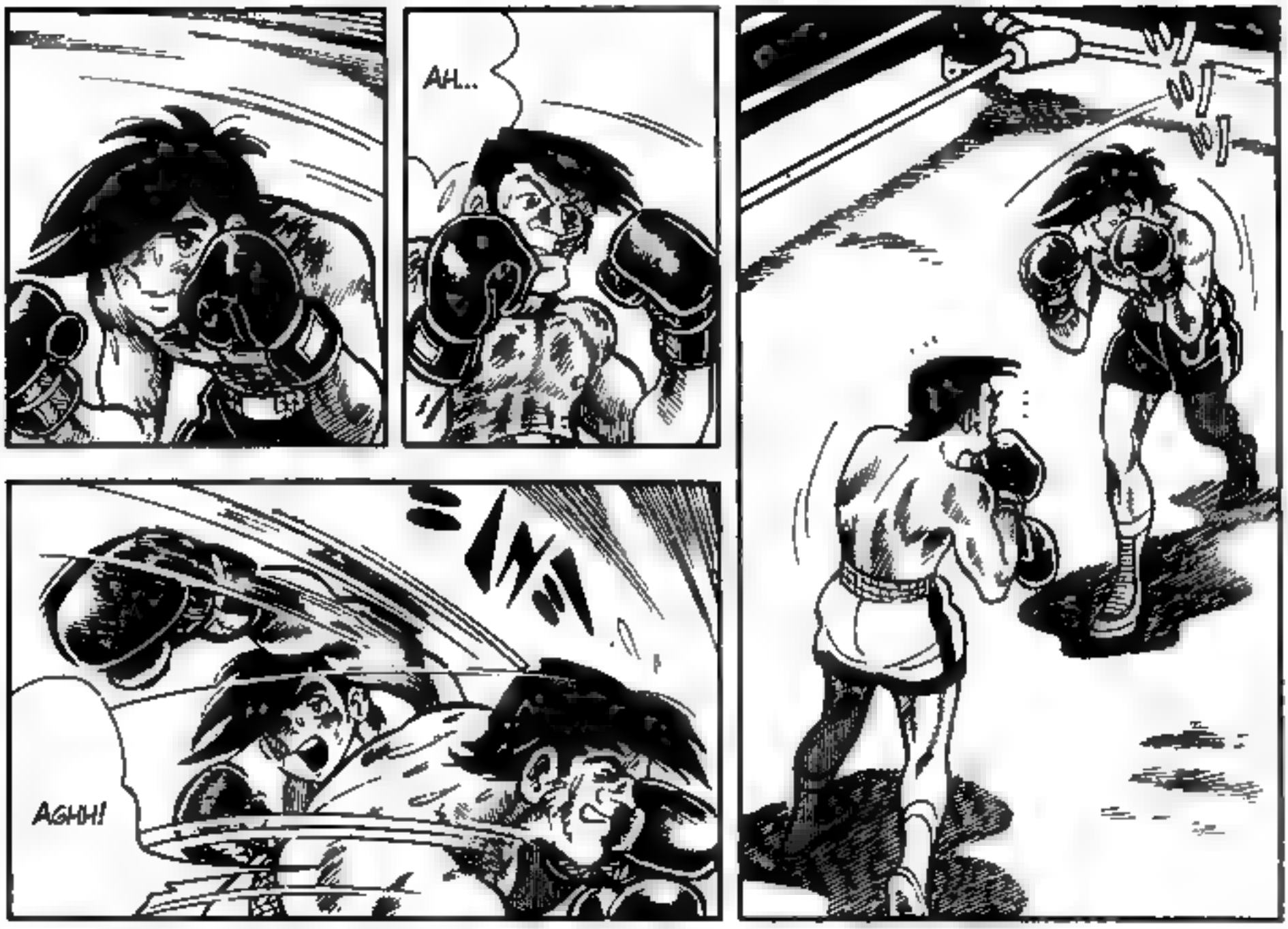
I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S JUST 'CAUSE YOU'RE TIRED OR WHATEVER,

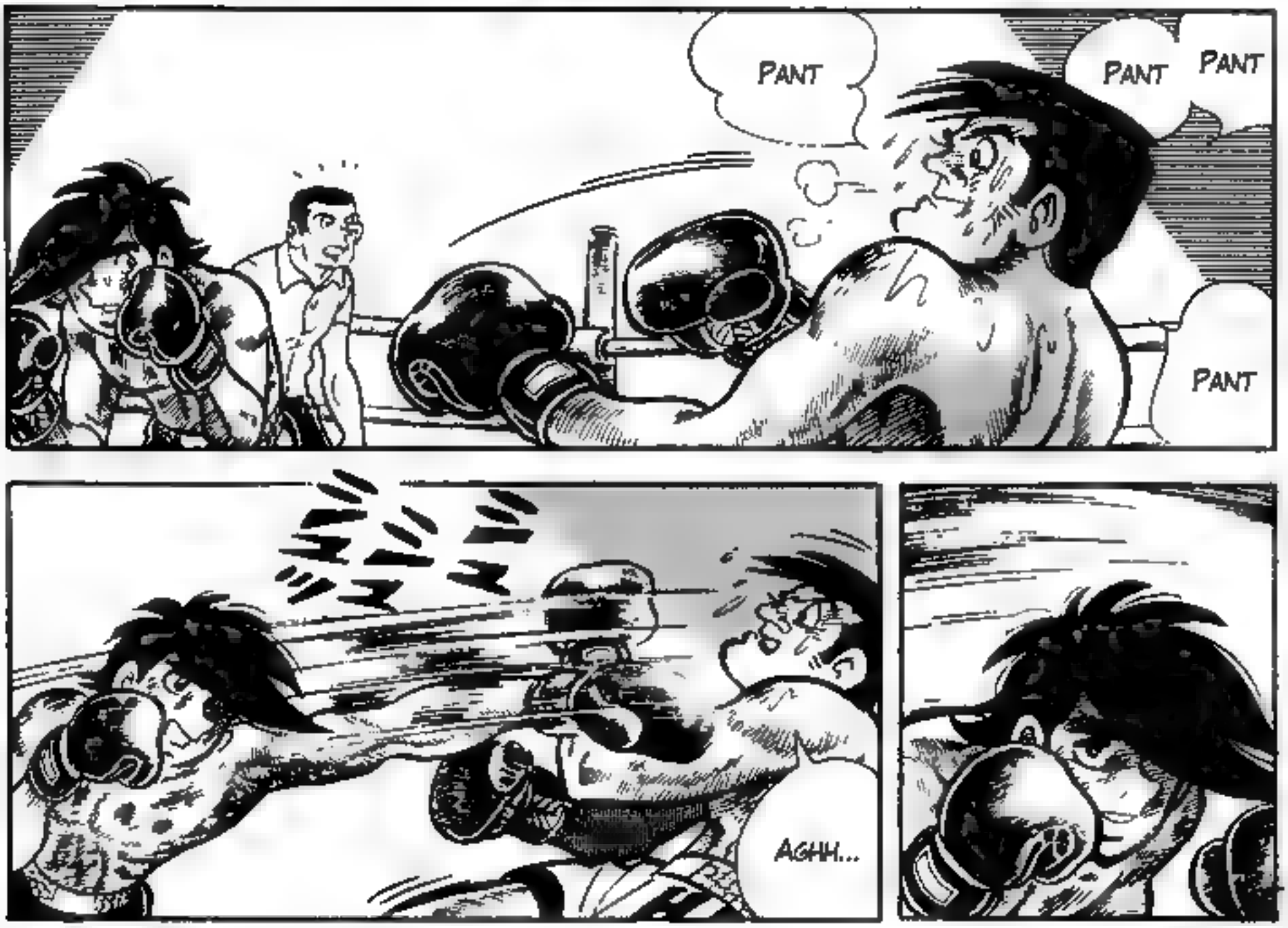
YOU'RE ACTING PRETTY STRANGE, JOE.

BUT YOU BEST QUICKLY WRAP THIS FIGHT UP IN THE NEXT ROUND.

IT'S THE START OF THE 3RD ROUND, FOLKS!
GET'M, JOE!

YEAH, AFTER THAT KNOCKDOWN, HE DOESN'T KNOW IF HE SHOULD BLOCK UP HIGH OR DOWN LOW....!
HARAJIMA'S SCARED OUT OF HIS WITS!
HAHA! LOOK, NISHI!


AH...
AGHH!


PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT

AGHH...

PANT
PANT
PANT

UH...

AND YOU CALL YOURSELF A PRO-BOXER!? PATHETIC!

THE HELL ARE YOU PANICKING OUT THERE FOR, HARAJIMA!?

H-HARAJIMA...

HUFF
HUFF

HUFF
HUFF

FIGHT!

I SAID FIGHT, HARAJIMA!

HAH...

GIVE IT UP! YOU AIN'T NO BOXER!

TO HAVE THE #1 RANKED BANTAM-WEIGHT BOXER PISSING HIS PANTS!?

HAH! IS ONE PUNCH TO THE HEAD ALL IT TAKES,

HUFF

HUFF

UGH...

D-DAMN IT...!

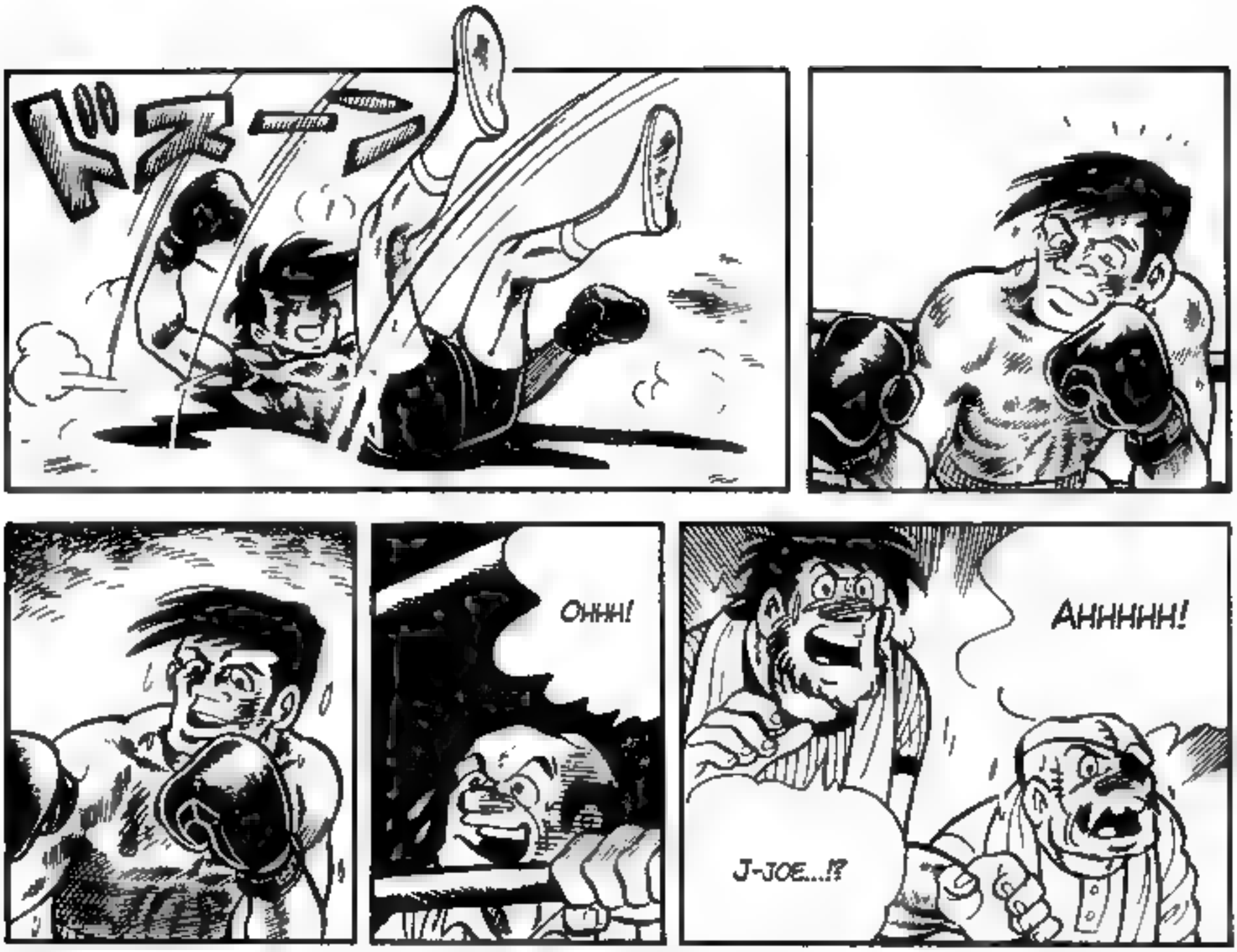
YOU'VE GOT HIM CORNERED!

FINISH HIM OFF WITH A COUNTER TO THE HEAD!

D...

KO

NGH!


OHHH!
AHHHHH!
J-JOE...!?

5!
4!
3!
NO WAIT, THAT'S A DOWN! BACK TO YOUR CORNER!
S-SLIP?
GODDAMN IT...
PSH!

YEAH, YEAH, I'M UP ALREADY SO JUST WIPE MY GLOVES OFF.
8!
7!

W-WHAT WAS THAT JUST NOW...
HE JUST FELL ON HIS ASS ALL OF A SUDDEN.
IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH JOE TODAY?

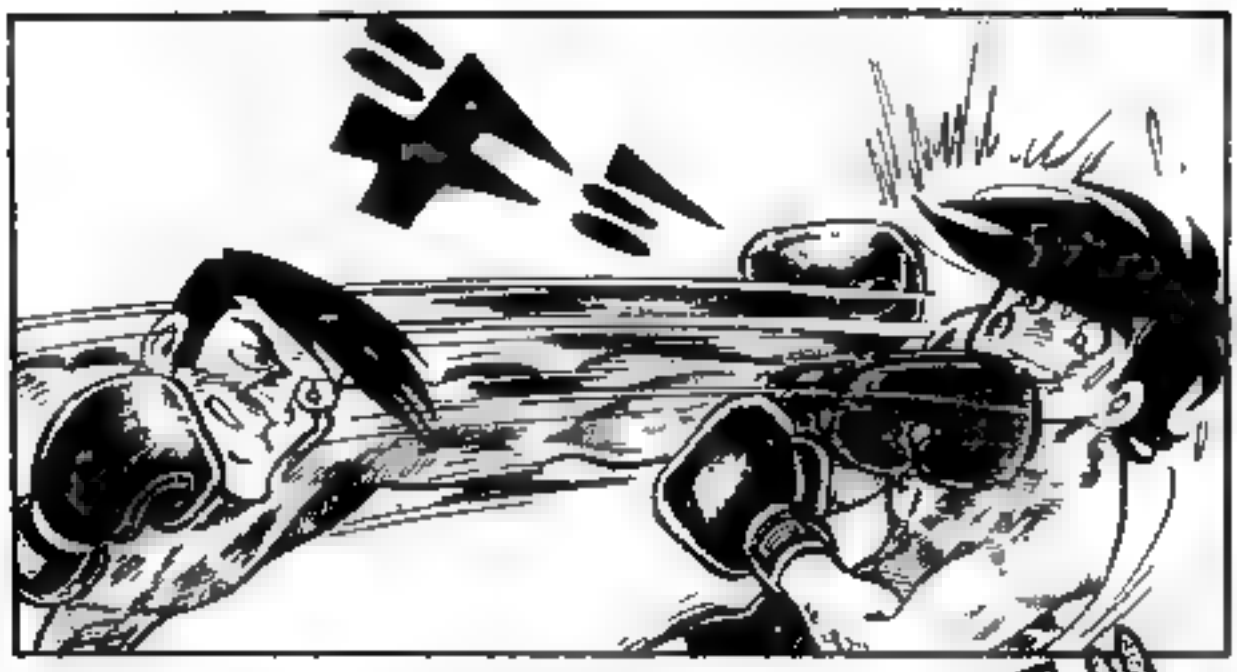
NOW'S YOUR CHANCE!
HARAJIMA! IT LOOKS LIKE HIS LEGS HAVE GIVEN IN!

...

I KNEW SOMETHING WAS A LITTLE OFF ABOUT HIM...
I...
FIGHT ON!

I KNOW.
R-RIGHT.

HEH HEH. GUESS THE DAMAGE HE TOOK DURING THE FIRST TWO ROUNDS IS FINALLY STARTING TO SHOW.
SEEMED WAY TOO SLOPPY.
HIS ATTACKS JUST NOW,



WELL, IF THERE'S AN OPENING, I'LL GLADLY TAKE IT!

KEEP PUNCHING HIM!
ATTA BOY!

ZU
ZU
ZU
ZU

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU!?
JOE!

SLIP UP JUST ONE LITTLE BIT AND HE STARTS ACTIN' ALL BIG AND TOUGH AGAIN...
THIS COWARDLY SON OF A...

HU

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU,

NGH!

NOT TO GET COCKY, YOU LITTLE SHRIMP!

AHH!

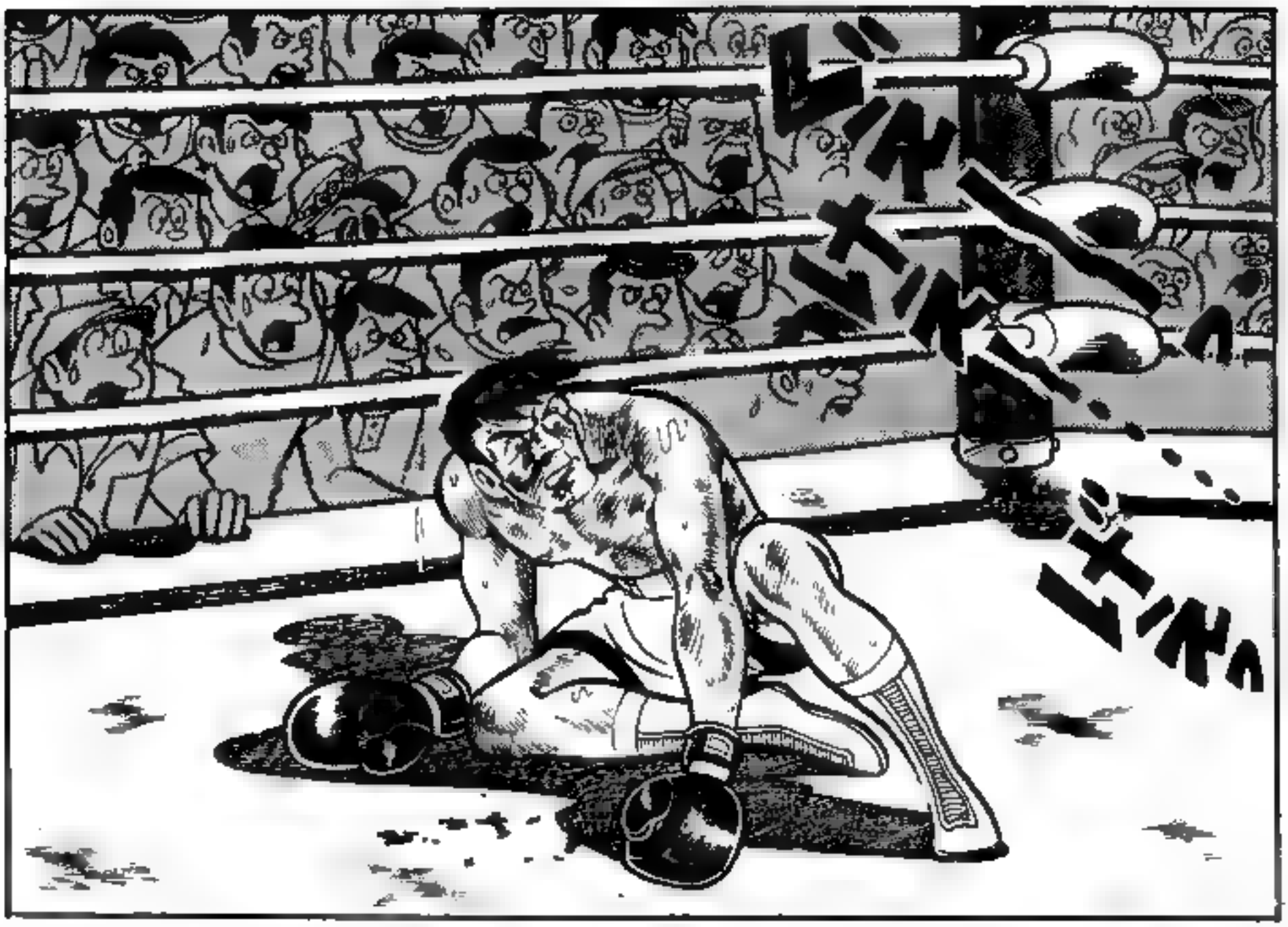
HERE, HAVE ANOTHER!

WOO

UGHH!

...
AN AMAZING ONE-TWO PUNCH RIGHT TO HIS FACE!
H-HE DID IT!
NFF-
MNN...
AGHHH...
JOE...!

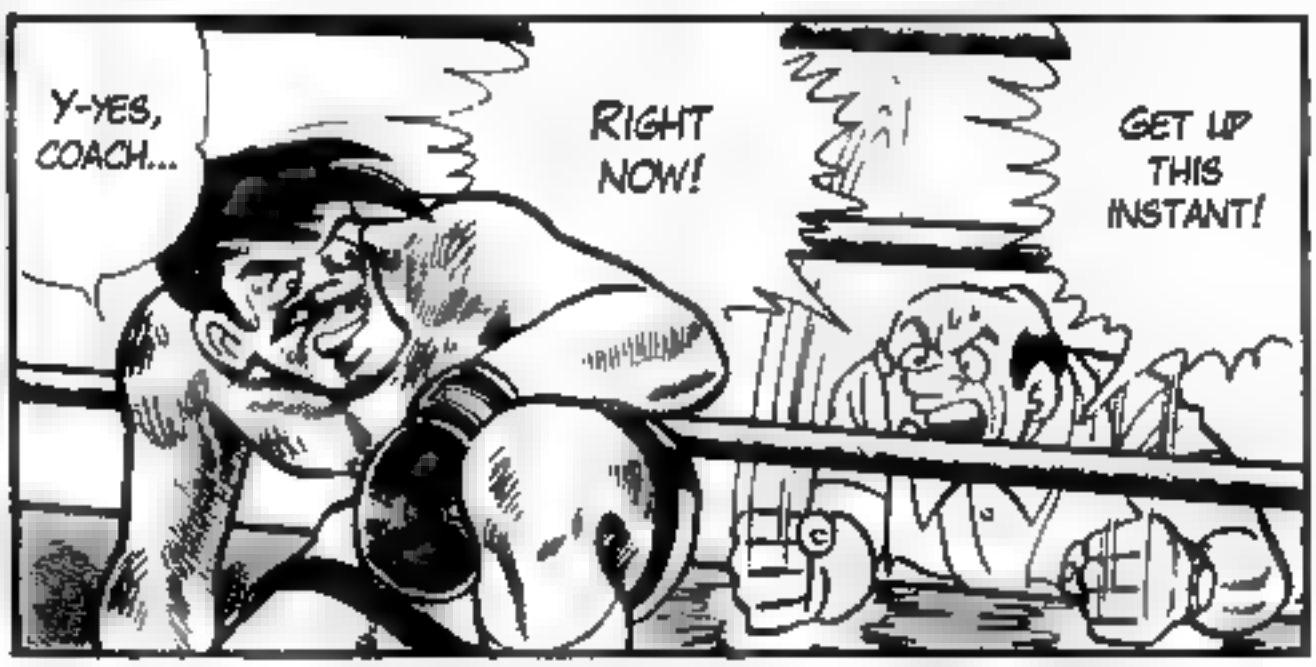
JOE...

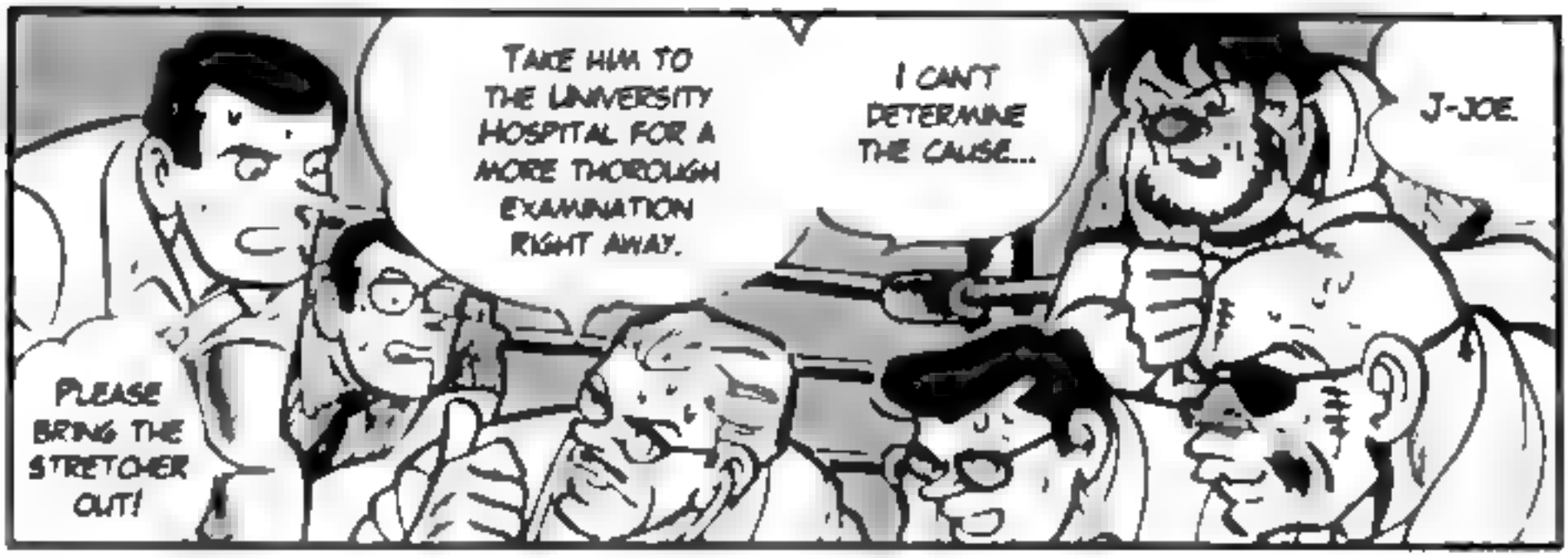

DOCTOR! I NEED A DOCTOR!
DOC...
D...

ゴンッ…

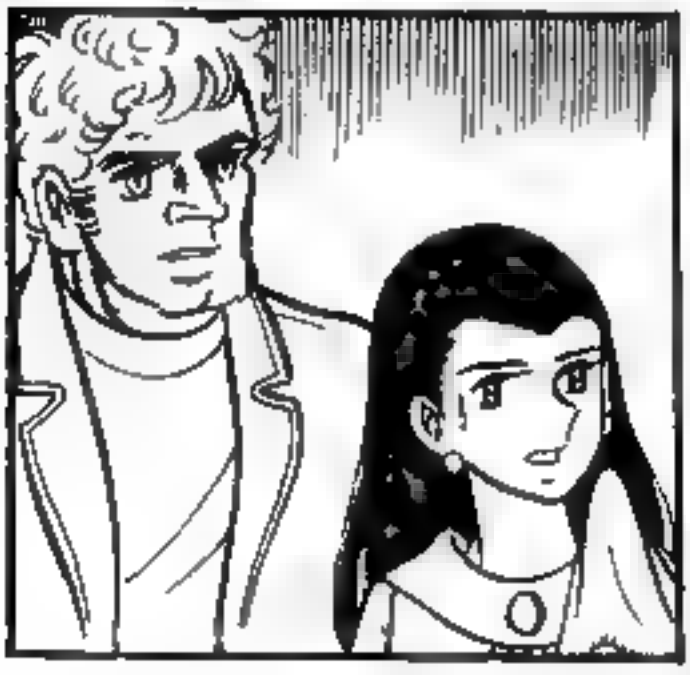
DON'T JUST SIT THERE! GET UP!
H-HARAJIMA!

…

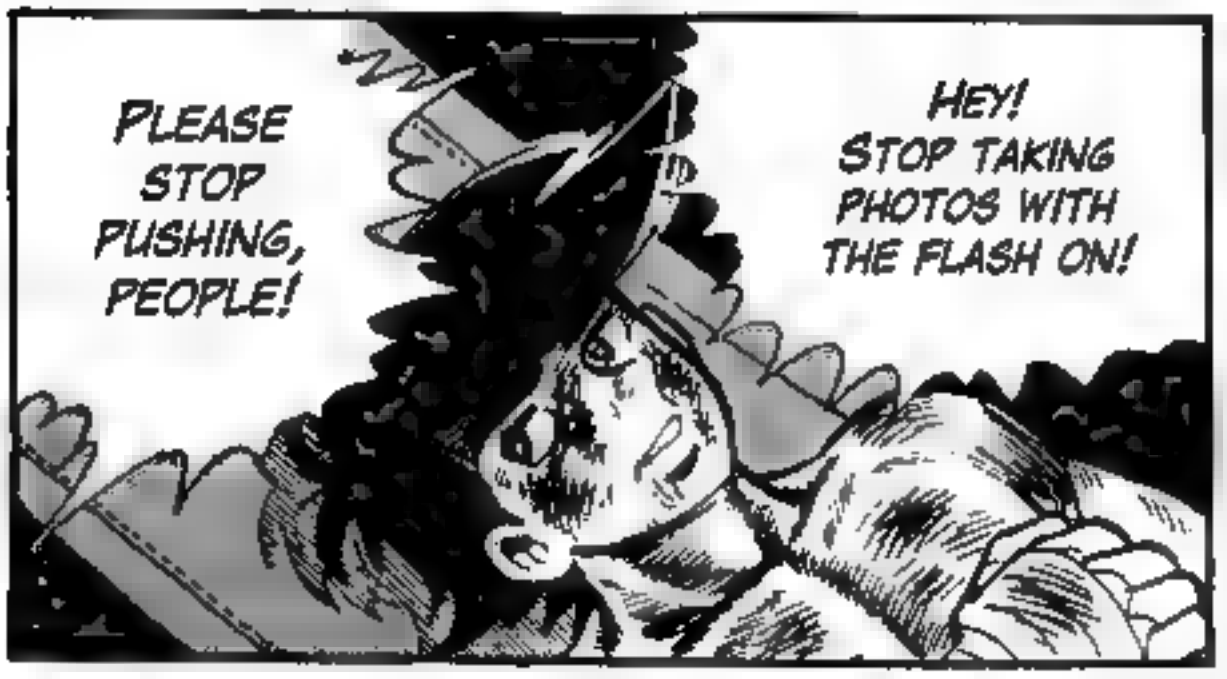

Y-YES, COACH...
RIGHT NOW!
GET UP THIS INSTANT!

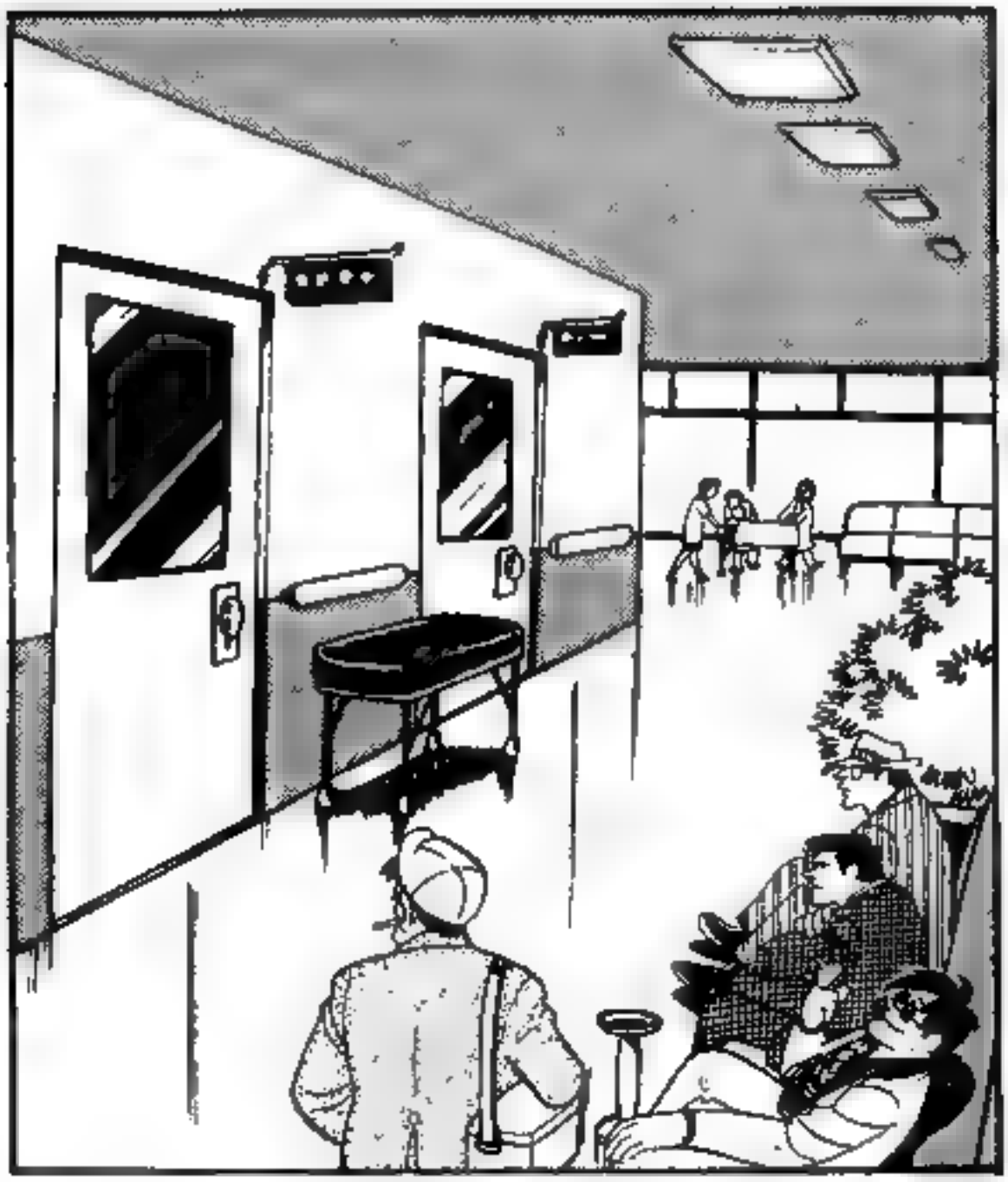

PLEASE BRING THE STRETCHER OUT!
TAKE HIM TO THE UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL FOR A MORE THOROUGH EXAMINATION RIGHT AWAY.
I CAN'T DETERMINE THE CAUSE...
J-JOE.

HAVE YOU CALLED THE AMBULANCE?
CLEAR THE WAY!
I ASK ALL OF YOU TO PLEASE CLEAR THE WAY THIS IS AN EMERGENCY.
THEY'RE ALREADY AT THE BACK ENTRANCE.



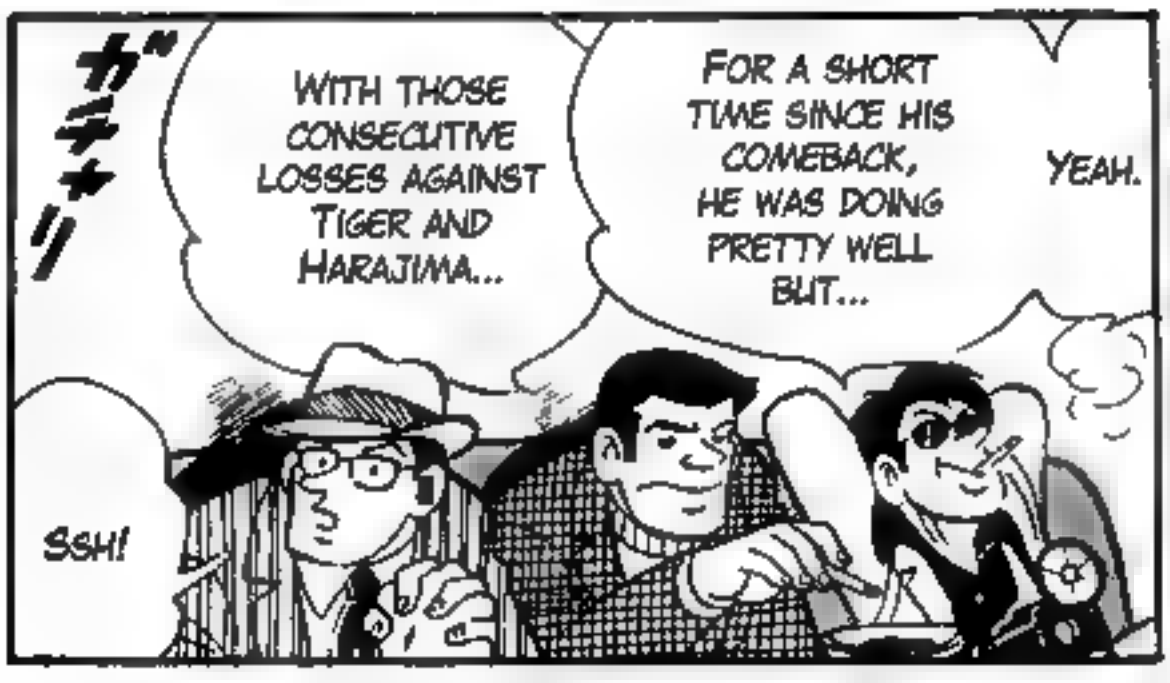
THIS IS MAKING ME QUEASY...
LET'S GO, ROBERT...


PLEASE STOP PUSHING, PEOPLE!
HEY! STOP TAKING PHOTOS WITH THE FLASH ON!



HOSPITAL

BUT EVER SINCE THE FIGHT WITH RIKIISHI, HE'S TURNED INTO A HAS-BEEN BOXER WHOSE GLORY DAYS ARE BEHIND HIM.
YABUKI JOE, THE MAN ONCE CALLED THE WILD BEAST...


カ"
ナナナ
WITH THOSE CONSECUTIVE LOSSES AGAINST TIGER AND HARAJIMA...
FOR A SHORT TIME SINCE HIS COMEBACK, HE WAS DOING PRETTY WELL BUT...
YEAH.
SSH!

BUT AS FOR THE CAUSE... I'M AFRAID IT'S UNCERTAIN.
HIS NAUSEA'S GONE,
COULD YOU TELL US THE CAUSE BEHIND HIS SUDDEN VOMITING?
SO HOW'S HIS CONDITION?

WHAT...?

WE'RE STILL BAFFLED AS TO WHAT EXACTLY CAUSED THE SUDDEN NAUSEA ATTACK DURING THE MATCH.
WE FOUND HIM TO BE IN PERFECT HEALTH.
UPON BOTH AN EXAMINATION OF HIS BODY AND HIS BRAIN WAVES,

WE'RE NOT TAKING ANY INTERVIEWS NOR ANSWERING ANY QUESTIONS SO PLEASE STEP ASIDE.

LET'S GO, JOE.

HEY! MOVE IT!

RIGHT.

CALL A CAB, NISHI...

MIGHT HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY ALL THE DAMAGE HE SUSTAINED FROM HARAJIMA'S BLOWS?

COACH TANGE! DO YOU THINK YABUKI'S SUDDEN VOMITING DURING HIS FIGHT,

D'YOU THINK THIS IS IT FOR YABUKI'S CAREER?

WHO COULD'VE EXPECTED SUCH AN UNFORTUNATE TURN OF EVENTS?

THE LOOK ON THOSE THREE'S FACES WAS JUST TOO DEPRESSING TO SEE...

丹下拳闘クラブ
AH! THEY'RE BACK...

WE SAW YOUR FIGHT ON TV!
WELCOME BACK, BROTHER JOE!

TAKE HIM UPSTAIRS AND HAVE HIM GET SOME SHUT-EYE, NISHI.

LET'S GO, JOE.

RIGHT.

HE'S FINE NOW.

SO... HOW IS HE RIGHT NOW?

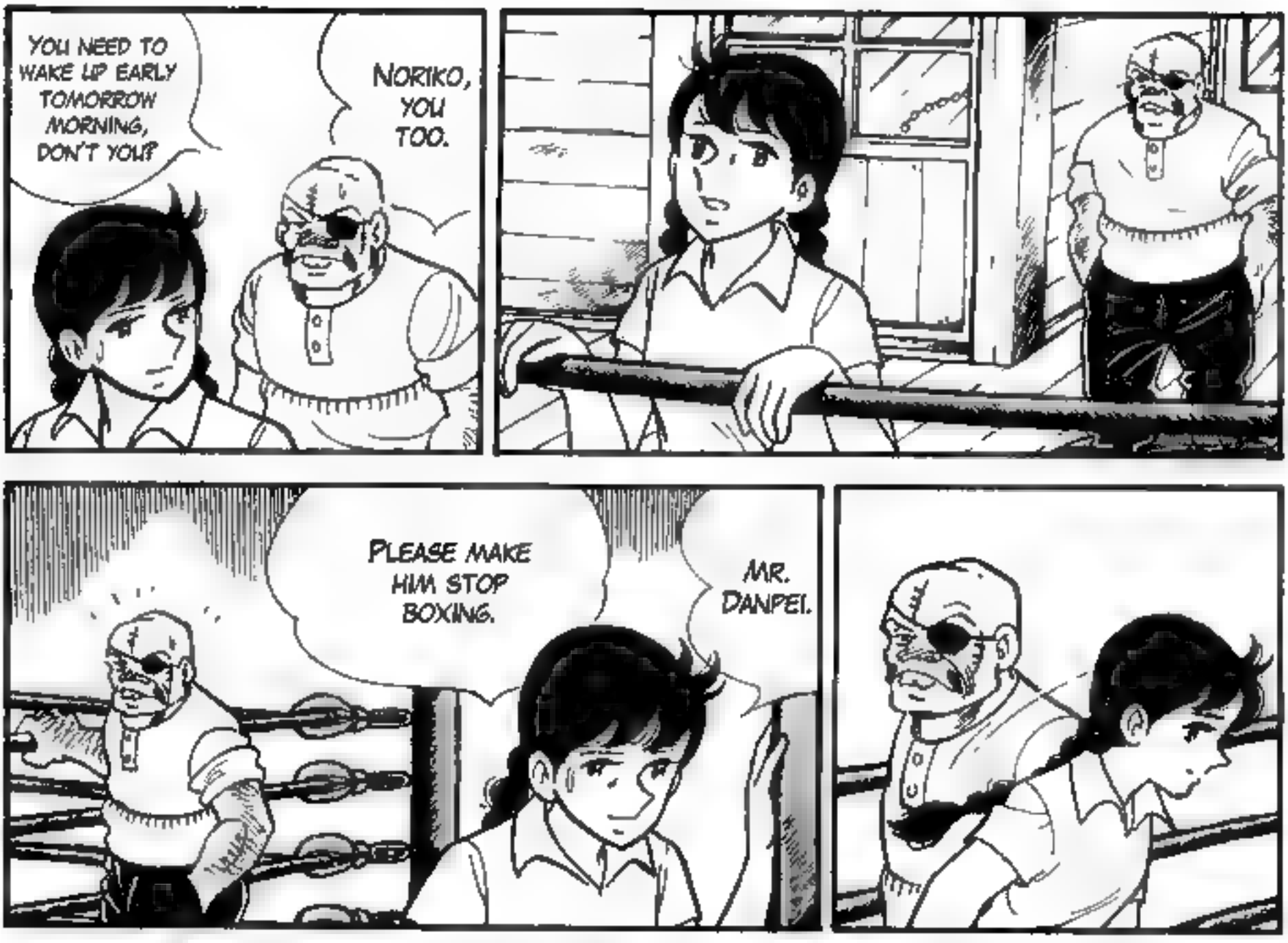
WE ALSO SAW JOE THROWING UP ALL OF A SUDDEN.

IT'S NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

BUT WHAT JOE NEEDS MOST RIGHT NOW IS REST SO I'LL HAVE TO ASK YOU TO LEAVE.

SORRY FOR WORRYING ALL OF YOU.

SORRY, FOLKS...


YOU NEED TO WAKE UP EARLY TOMORROW MORNING, DON'T YOU?
NORIKO, YOU TOO.
PLEASE MAKE HIM STOP BOXING.
MR. DANPEI.
HE DOESN'T EVEN SEEM HUMAN AS OF LATE...
EVEN NOW...
UNTIL HE BECOMES PERMANENTLY CRIPPLED.
PLEASE... IF YOU LET HIM FIGHT ANYMORE, HE'LL CONTINUE TO WRECK HIS BODY,
...
A FIGHTING DOG COVERED IN SCARS AND BRUISES!
HE LOOKS LIKE A DOG BRED ONLY TO FIGHT!
HE DOESN'T!

I THINK THE TIME TO CLOSE UP TANGE GYM HAS COME...

AS REGRETTABLE AS IT IS TO ADMIT,

NISHI ALSO HASN'T RETURNED TO HIS USUAL FORM EVER SINCE BREAKING HIS FIST.

I'VE BEEN THINKING TOO.

YOU DON'T NEED TO TELL ME.

'KAY, KIDS?

TAKE NORIKO SAFELY BACK HOME,

SURE...

HM? YOU KIDS WERE STILL HERE?

IS HE SLEEPING?

LOOKS LIKE IT...

SURE THING.

I WONDER WHAT'S HAPPENED TO OUR JOE...

TO THINK SOMETHING LIKE THAT WOULD HAPPEN DURING A MATCH...

SEEMS LIKE NORIKO MADE US DINNER AGAIN.

LET'S EAT, NISHI.

JOE MANAGED TO HIT HARAJIMA ON THE HEAD TWICE, NO, THREE TIMES.

BUT EVEN SO,

HE'S STILL HAUNTED BY HIS GHOST...

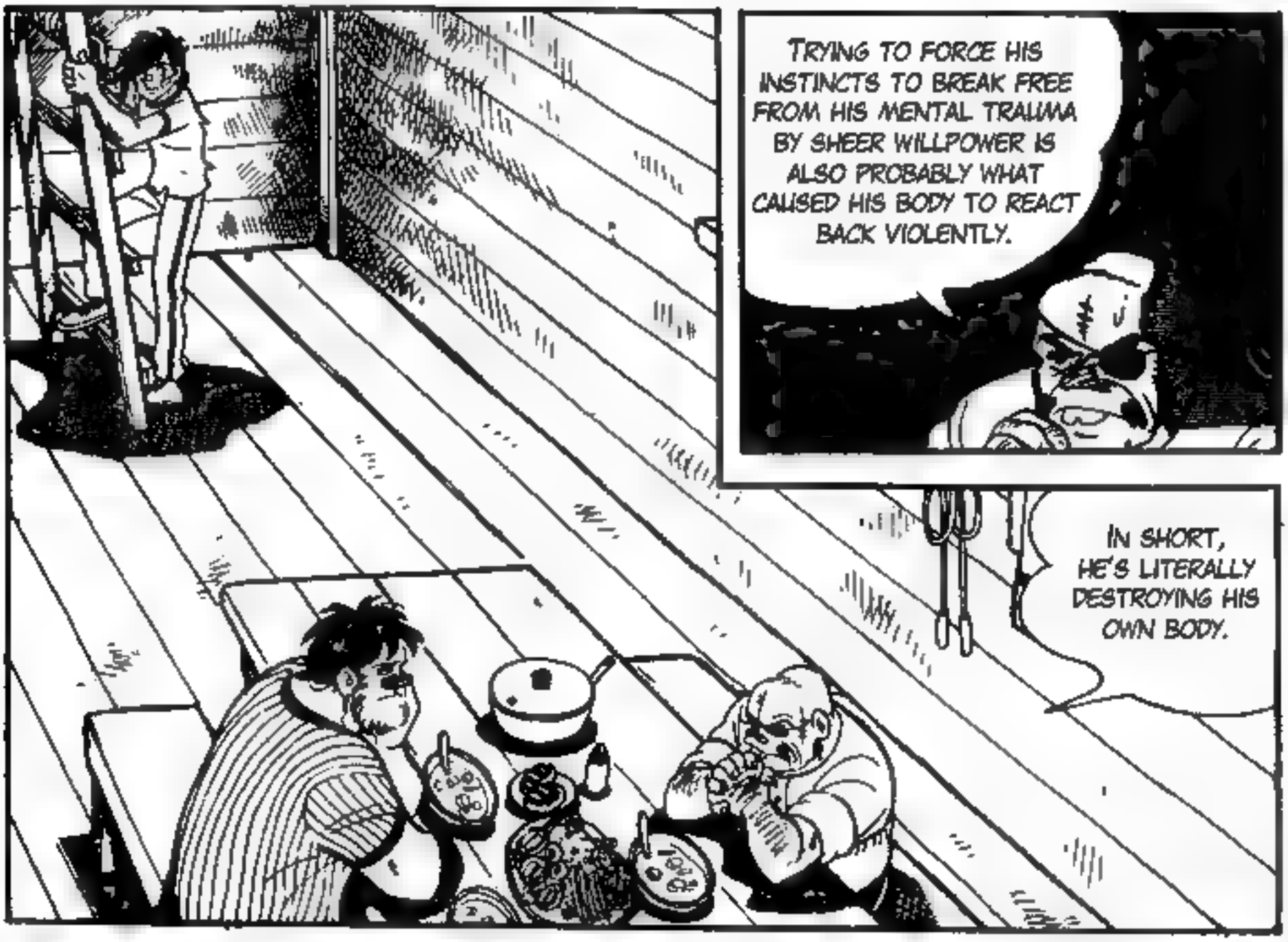
THAT SHOCK HE RECEIVED FROM KILLING RIKIISHI WAS JUST TOO BIG.

HIS OLD FIGHTING INSTINCTS, SUPPRESSED AS THEY ARE NOW, MUST HAVE FLARED UP FOR AN INSTANT DURING THOSE CASES...

HE SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO THROW THOSE PUNCHES.

TRUE...

AND MORE IMPORTANTLY,
BUT IT FLARED UP FOR ONLY AN INSTANT. IT'S NOT SOMETHING HE CAN SUSTAIN FOR A LONG PERIOD.


TRYING TO FORCE HIS INSTINCTS TO BREAK FREE FROM HIS MENTAL TRAUMA BY SHEER WILLPOWER IS ALSO PROBABLY WHAT CAUSED HIS BODY TO REACT BACK VIOLENTLY.
IN SHORT, HE'S LITERALLY DESTROYING HIS OWN BODY.

W...

WHAT FOR!?

IF YOU DON'T MIND, COULD YOU FINISH YOUR DINNER AND CLEAR THIS PLACE?

FINISHED WITH YOUR EXPLANATION?

J-JOE...!

TO PREPARE FOR MY NEXT MATCH.

AIN'T THAT OBVIOUS?

I WANT TO WORK OUT A BIT BEFORE SLEEPING.

YOU JUST CAME BACK FROM A MATCH BLOODIED AND BRUISED!

ARE YOU CRAZY!?

JOE!

I KNOW MY OWN BODY BEST.

STOP LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT.

. . . .

DON'T WORRY, I WON'T THROW UP.

WHAT, NOT GONNA EAT?

GONNA GET DUST ON YOUR RICE IF YOU DON'T EAT UP SOON.

HAHHH!

HAHHH!

〔第10巻おわり〕

WELL THIS MUTT IS PLANNING ON DRIVING OUT RIKIISHI'S GHOST OR DIE TRYING!

A FIGHTING DOG COVERED IN SCARS AND BRUISES, IS HE NOW...

……

CLEANING: HAPPYSCANS
TRANLATIONS: HOX
TYPESETTING: ARLES